アブソリュート・デュオ

Absolute Duo

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「……お、女の子……!?」
ヴァレリアの瞳が、驚きで大きく見開かれる。
襲い掛かってきたのは、紛うかたなく
銀色の髪と深紅の瞳を持つ幼い少女であった。
そして、少女の小さな手には、
《双剣》が握られていた。

ふにょん。
『ひゃふっ!?』
……何だろう、俺の手が掴んだ
この柔らかいものは。
いや、俺だって自分が
何を掴んだのかくらいわかっている。
現実逃避をしたいだけだ——が、
そうもいかないのが世の理というものだ。
ふにょんふにょん
ふにょんふにょん。

「今度あたしの部屋に
一人で来てくれたら、
これで出迎えてあげるわよ♥」
……視線が顔より下に
幾度か行ってしまいつつ。
そしてリーリスも
そうした俺の視線に気づく。

Prologue

Part 1

“Gimle the country protected by the silver wolf-------- The beast incarnation of god, huh……..”

4 years ago in winter-----

The <<Exceed>> with the nickname <<Stellar>>- Valeria Carlyle saw the legend in front of her at a small country located in Northern Europe.

IT happened when she chased the traces of a criminal organization that ran to Gimle and stepped into a thick forest that looked perfect for wild animals to lurk around.

Suddenly, a gunshot echo mixed in the sound of a raging blizzard.

Next off, there was a scream.

(……an internal dispute? Or, were they attacked by animals?)

While preparing for several cases, she ran with all her strength towards the direction where the gunshot and scream came from------

Valeria gasped when she reached the spot.

All of the members she was chasing after were all lying on the snow.

(……what is going on?)

The men groaning on the red-smeared snow were all carved with the same type of wound.

The wounds weren’t from the fangs or claws of an animal and were clearly from a sharp blade.

The line of internal dispute would be in the likelihood, that won't be true but as long as the whole group has the same wounds.

(What happened here……..!!)

Bewilderment instantly turned to cautiousness.

That's because she felt someone's presence-----or strong murder intent.

The view Valeria was looking at-----

Had an animal there.

"Silver wolf"

Even though she can't get a fix on its appearance because of the blowing blizzard, it had the presence of a wild animal.

The reason why she mumbled silver wolf was because its fur was beautiful silver.

(This is a silver wolf…… The beast incarnation of god……)

While recalling the legend, Velaria thought of one question.

Should this be called; the silver wolf showed itself to punish the hoodlums disturbing Gimle's peace?

Should she say that the silver wolf standing in front of her came to defeat these men because of that?

But, that would oppose Valeria's opinion on their wounds.

(Just what is going on here…….?)

Only the silver wolf knows the answer, and its fact that it was looking at Valeria with eyes filled with hostility.

"…….i just came to chase these men"

She raised both her hands to show that she meant no harm and told it that.

Even though she doesn't think that words will go through, she wanted to avoid fighting it if it's really this country's guardian. She did not come to disturb Gimle's peace anyway.

But----a fight wasn't avoidable.

The silver beast splashed the snow under its feet and attacked her.

Even though she immediately dodged, Valeria looked surprised when her upper body was cut together with the cold air.

No matter if it's an ambush with the view bad because of the blizzard; the beast was amazing since the physical abilities of a <<high level>>--<<Exceed>> Valeria was unable to grasp its movements.

(……..i knew it, it's a divine beast!!)

Valeria turned her own <<Soul>> into the <<Blaze>> to block the attack coming again from the silver wolf.

Giiiin!! At that moment, the sound of metals clashing echoed-----and she found out the silver wolf's identity.

"……A G-girl……!?"

Valeria's eyes opened wide in shock.

What attacked her was definitely a ***young girl with crimson red eyes and silver hair***.

And, the <<Double>> was held in the girl's little hands.

The girl's name is Julie Sigtuna.

This is from ***4 years ago***, a part of the events hidden in the Dawn Organization as top secret.

Chapter 1 『To think, I Of All People Would-----』

Part 1

The night before the next day in the summer break that won't last even for one week.

Kibitsu Momo was in the classroom instead of her own dormitory room.

"Found it. I am sorry but, I found it"

She took out a printout from inside her table and told it to the security guard that followed her.

The printout she was holding was her summer break topic she forgot to bring back.

Anyone would think that she didn't have to go to take it at such a late time but, she has a small situation for the reason.

Momo who was planning to go home tomorrow, knew very well that there is a possibility that she might forget about the topic's existence again if she comes to pick it at the morning. For her, who has a carefree personality, she has forgotten many things in a daily basis and it isn't rare for her to borrow textbooks or notes from her roommate friend.

But, she couldn't borrow the summer break topic as expected so, this is the reason why she gave a visit to the school at night.

In a normal sense; going to the school at night might feel scary.

That's because deaths appeared in the fight with the <<Libels>> just one month ago.

However, many people would come out from the building regardless if it's noon or night since the <<Lucifer>> research facility is under Kouryou academy's school building. Naturally, Momo thought that no one would get angry if she turns on the classroom or corridor light if she told the office workers in the receptionist stationed at the school entrance.

Luckily, since a security guard volunteered to follow her, Momo was able to head back to her dorm without going through any fear.

"Thank you very much. Good luck surveying"

After thanking the security guard who followed her until the entrance, the girl started walking while looking up at the night sky with sparkling stars.

At the same time------

On the rooftop of the clock tower located in the middle of the academy, an <<Exceed>> and <<El Libel>>------people who transcends humans were confronting each other.

The <<El Libel>>-----<<K>> gave off 4 red glowing wings behind his back to allow him to float in the sky.

"External weapon----I will show you the power of the <<DestructionWings of death>>!!"

"Kuhah, this is interesting! That's one over exaggerated name but, don't disappoint me okay!!"

The <<Exceed>>----Tsukimi Rito shouted and swung the <<Whip bladeSnake>> she was holding. The countless blades connected by a steel wire attacked the teenager with whip-like movements----but, it was just a greeting and the slash ended only as a test-run.

After dodging the blades which were connected to a higher position, <<K>> made a crazy smile.

“Fufuu, you need not to worry. I will definitely satisfy you……but, that’s as long as you don’t die before I bring out everything of the <<DestructionWings of death>>!!”

To respond to the teenager’s words-----half of the 2 wings behind him turned into a grip with triggers.

The wings turned into guns.

While holding the wing with an underhand grip, the moment<<K>> pointed the muzzle at the tip of the wing towards Rito, light bullets were shot out the instant he pulled the trigger.

But, Rito showed a swift move that’s unthinkable on the roof with bad foothold, and dodged the light bullet.

The dodged light bullets burst and gouged a hole the same time it was shot into the roof. Even without losing its power, she would receive big damage depending on the place he hits.

“Just how long are you planning to look down on others!!”

While dodging the light bullets with low posture, Rito performed the counter attack. She bended the <<Snake>> and operated the blade to slash diagonally. Even if he twist his body to dodge the attack-----

“It’s already in my predictions!!”

With dodging already calculated in Rito’s mind, she maneuvered it again with the handle and the weapon with the name of the snake displayed its real value.

Immediately, the blade that passed him bounced up and attacked at the teenager again.

“Kuh……..!!”

Even though <<K>> responded painfully, only a few of his hair flew into the sky since he was unable to dodge the second attack.

“Kuhahaha!! I still can go!!”

Rito moved her hands again.

The tip of the <<Snake>> extended to the moon above and devoured <<K>>’s head after falling down----was what should have happened.

Gakiiin!! The 3rd attack-----***was deflected by the blade emitting light***.

“What!?”

<<K>>’s gun created a red light blade and he swung it to deflect Rito’s attack.

Immediately, the red light glow emitted by the remaining 2 <<DestructionWings of death>> at <<K>>’s back increased------and charged at Rito with a power enough to make her concentrate even though she has confidence in her speed.

Without giving Rito any room to breathe, <<K>> mode changed <<DestructionWings of death>> to a sword from the gun and get into range.

The red blades held in both of his hands, attacked her from below and the side to reap her life.

Rito took a step back to dodge the upward slash and used her <<Snake>> to block the side sweep.

It was all good to that point but, Rito was thrown towards the roof since she was overpowered.

A normal person would suffer serious injuries and she was falling at a height where she might lose her life if things go bad------

But, Rito twists her body mid-air like a cat and landed without suffering any injuries.

“Kuhah, interesting! Now you’ve done it!!”

Wings that hold explosive charging power which allows him to move freely in the sky------

When the wings are in his hands, he is able to freely change the mode to a gun for mid-range and sword for close-range-----

After seeing both of his abilities, she looked up at the tower with a blood boiling body stimulating expression because of her battle loving personality------but, after an instant, she opened her eyes wide.

It was so that Rito could catch <<K>> pointing the gun at her after he reconverted the sword back to the gun in her view.

It was so that she can see him concentrate light at the muzzle which was different from the other shots he performed until now.

That’s because, the wings in <<K>>’s hands turned back into gun mode and he pointed the muzzle at Rito.

That wasn’t all; light was concentrating at the muzzle unlike the firing rate he was showing until now.

(This is bad, something is coming!!)

After seeing the concentrated light, her intuition filled with accumulated battle experience was telling Rito to not stop at that spot.

Without opposing her intuition, she took a big leap away and at the same time-----

<<K>> pulled the trigger and two red convergence beam were shot.

The fired red beam, pierced into the spot Rito was just standing and gouged it out; after a slight pause, an explosion occurred.

Rito got pushed by the explosion and sound and fell on top of the lawn, dirtying her clothes in the process.

If she were to stay put then, she would probably be considerably damaged by the explosion even if she manages to dodge the red beam.

“Fufu, you have good judgment skills for dodging that”

<<K>> praised Rito for choosing to dodge immediately.

“Don’t Fufu me. Like heck that will hit me! Forget that, you just ripped my handmade petticoat!! Now I have to sew it all over again!!”

During the exchange on the tower roof, she may not have gotten touched by the red blade but, she was unable to avoid the slash from downwards causing her clothes to get cut. Her skirt and the petticoat inside was sliced upwards just like what she cursed about, revealing her thighs.

But, Tsukimi may look carefree but, she was quite shaken at the Ether cannon inside her heart.

(God damn it, if he keeps shooting that nasty one then there will be casualties in the brat’s dorm if I mess up!! if have to guide him southwards somehow-----)

Right when she thought to that point, Rito laughed at her own thoughts.

(Kuhah, to think I of all people would worry about someone else…….i guess I'll complain to that nice guy------no, I'll tease him and embarrass him!)

The face of her favorite boy floated in her mind and Rito made a small smile.

"For that, I guess I'll end this already!! Come one, open your eyeballs nicely and see this!! In the first place-----"

Rito *Pan* hit her exposed thighs.

"You can look at this you know!! Though, you're dead the instant you see it!!"

Rito raised the <<Snake>> to the sky and released the real <<Power>> of her <<Blaze>>.

"Devour to death----<<Ouroboros>>!!"

The blades surrounding her started spinning in high-speed and drew a circle.

In front of the circlet blade that while slice anything it touches, <<K>> was making his usual light smile while telling her this.

"So that's the real <<Power>> of your <<Blaze>>……..I want to have fun was what I was thinking but-------I don't have much time left so, let's end this quickly!!"

Part 2

Until that time, I was in my room with Julie and Tora attending to the summer break topic that will start tomorrow.

Normally, Miyabi and Tachibina would be here but, it's different for today.

Its summer break starting from tomorrow but, since we are allowed to go back even today, everyone else except us has left the academy during the evening.

Since me and Tora are going to visit Otoha's grave tomorrow, we decided that it would be the day we head back.

But----

The remaining silver girl has no plans to go back since she says that the trip to her birthplace takes too long.

(Even though she really wants to go to her mother and get pampered……..)

Only I know that the girl with Silver BlondeSilver hair has a spoilt and lonely side.

When I looked over to her, she was not moving her hands and looked blanked; maybe she was stuck at her topic or she recalled back her mother in her birthplace.

Julie suddenly looked at me.

"Tooru"

Of course, we ended looking at each other since I was still looking at Julie.

""……""

"……..why are you two looking at each other silently"

The 3rd part Tora was the one who broke the silence.

"I have something I want to say but, Tooru was looking over her so……perhaps, you have something to say?"

"Eh, ah……..no, I was just wondering why your hands stopped from just now"

"I was thinking about the topic I am about to talk now"

When I was asked her what's up with her, she replied back that she has a request.

"Can I follow you two tomorrow too?"

"Follow……meaning, you want to come with us to Fujisawa?"

Chirin her bells rang when the silver girl nodded.

"I want to go greet Otoha-san. If possible, I want to report to her that I am teamed up with Tooru as my <<Duo>> and have normally been taken care of by him"

"Err……I don't mind but--------"

"Fuun, why not? Otoha is probably curious on what kind of person is the <<Duo>> protecting her unreliable brother's back"

"……"

Those were harsh words but, it's true that I have been causing Otoha to worry so I have nothing to reply.

"W-well, I don't have any problem since Tora say's okay. Also-----Otoha probably prefers it to be livelier"

"Ja--. Thank-----"

The silver girl could not finish her thanks.

It's because ***the time*** came.

Zuzuuun……!! The dorm shook at the same time they heard an explosion-like sound outside and caused the window to make *Katakata* sounds.

“““------!!”””

3 of them gasped and immediately ran to the window to check outside-----

“Tooru, that’s……..!!”

Julie pointed to the clock tower and raised her voice.

A red flame could be seen around the tower.

Even if I concentrate, I could not distinguish what was happening because it of the darkness of the night and the distance.

But, it’s only natural to have a bad feeling if I recall the events that occurred in this one month.

The feeling was pushing me and I had to jump out of the room.

There was a commotion inside the dorm. At the corridor and lounge; students were looking at each other anxiously at the entrance and etc. Half-way when passing by them, a broadcast indicating [An unconfirmed explosion has occurred within the area, please stand-by in the dorm for further orders].

After ignoring the broadcast and jumping into the night ----I saw it.

It’s not that tall to call it the night sky but, I saw 2 beams spread to the ground from the sky.

And the explosion a slight pause later at where the light went.

“Tooru!” ”Tooru, that’s…….!!”

At that moment, Julie and Tora who were following me got closer to me.

“Yeah……someone is fighting!!”

My feelings changed to conviction.

The <<El Libel>> with sharp eyes popped up in my mind.

“Both of you----“

“Nai, have you forgotten that I am the <<Duo>> that will protect your back?”

“Fuun. I might not be your <<Duo>> but, I can’t leave this problem to an unreliable fellow like you to handle alone”

I judged that it’s useless to try to convince them by the will in their immediate reply.

“……..i understand. From the explosion we saw, it looks like it’s going to be quite dangerous. Please be careful”

“Ja--, let’s go!” “Fuun, no need for the needless worry!!”

After hearing their reply, we dashed.

With me at the front and Julie with Tora following------

3 of our voices mixed under the moonlight.

“””<<Blaze>>!!”””

Chapter 2 『Until The Day Death Separates Us』

Part 1

<<Exceed>> and <<God’s Destruction soldierEll.Libel>>------their fight has turned into one that does not allow any moment of neglect even for an instant.

Rito was swinging <<Ouroboros>> which resembles a giant chainsaw and <<K>> countered back by firing beams while stopping at a safe distance from the circlet blade.

The reason why <<K>> chose the distance with high risks is because, Rito was out from his range; even if he attacked from above one-sidedly, since the distance was too far away, he judged that the beam fired will be easily dodged.

Sometimes they would search for a chance from the opponent; sometimes they would attack like a storm to prevent the opponent to counter attack--------even if both sides suffered minor injuries, the attack that would decide whether if the battle would tilt to right of left wasn't getting settled, making it seem like this exchange would last forever.

However----that time came.

Suddenly, something unexpected happened.

Rito slipped through the countless approaching light bullets and swung her circlet blade.

However, <<K>> immediately activated his high-speed charge from the <<DestructionWings of death>> which he showed just now on top of the tower and dodged the circlet blade by flying over Rito's head.

He then spun his body mid-air and the moment he was about to randomly shoot his gun held by both his hands------<<K>>'s expression slightly distorted and his movements turned dull for an instant. This was the injury he got from the organization's pursuer far before this fight even began.

That was just a slight instant.

However, this this battle where abilities collide, a slight mistake is a critical hit.

Rito did not miss that moment.

“Gotcha!!”

The moment she shouted and was about to use her <<Ouroboros>>----

Rito was the one who stopped this time.

(Wha…….!? ***Why are you there!?***)

That’s because she saw a person-Kibitsu at the edge of her view.

Kibitsu who was unlucky to encounter their fight right when she was returning to the dorm from the school, was running south while hiding in the building shadows-----but, the battle zone moved as if they were chasing after her.

Rito decided to make some distance from the dorm and the research facility in the school as much as possible but, that turned out to be an opposite effect before she noticed.

Dooooon!! A light bullet hit Rito’s shoulder and exploded.

“Guuu!!”

A mistake was made by a slight disturbance in her concentration.

However, it’s a critical mistake that should not be shown in the middle of a fight.

Light bullet’s hit Rito’s limbs, body, and face when she was groaning from the damage she received.

Although she increased her guard to avoid a critical hit, her back was slammed towards the lawn.

The part which the light bullets burst were burned and made her distort her face in pain------and the view she saw after she stood up even after all that, was <<K>> in the sky pointing the muzzle with concentrated light at her.

“This is bad……..!!”

Even though she tried to dodge by jumping away, since she was hit by several light bullets, Rito is unable to use her normal speed and-----

After an instant, she was unable to dodge one of the 2 red beams and her side was gouged out.

Immediately, an explosion occurred behind her causing Rito to get blasted away by the impact.

"Sensei! Usa-sensei! Wake up, Usa-sensei!!"

The first thing that was shown in Rito's view when she regained consciousness was Kibitsu looking at her face while tears were falling off her face.

(Damn it……..i can't move my body…….no, more importantly-----)

"Id-iot……..hurry…….get away……."

Even when she told her that with that soft voice, she found out that it was too late when she saw a shadow standing behind Kibitsu.

"How unlucky, Tsukimi Rito. If this woman wasn't here then, the results might have been the opposite but------You should know that accidents tend to occur in a fight too"

"Y-yeah…….it's my loss…….that's why, I don't care about me……..but……..please……..let this one……..go……"

"Fufu, forget begging for your own life, you are one wonderful woman to beg for your student's safety by sacrificing yourself"

Kibitsu was looking at <K>> saying that while trembling.

Her trembling wouldn't stop for this is the first time in her life where she saw a fake smile like that.

When she saw his gaze, she predicted that she won't be saved unconsciously.

"But----"

Without losing his smile, <<K>> continued his words.

"Your will to only protect your student makes me feel sick"

His target- Kokonoe Tooru's face was floated in his mind.

"That's why, I can't listen to that request"

""-----!!""

Rito and Kibitsu gasped at the same time because of the meaning those words point to.

"Fufu, what nice expressions…….but, I am not a demon. I will let you two go friendly together. I will then take your corpses to him------to Kokonoe Tooru!!"

That demonic smile that can be taken as joy was stuck to his face and <<K>> swung his red light blade upwards.

"St-op…….stop-----!!"

Even though she tried to stop him, forget trying to cover Kibitsu, Rito couldn't even move one arm.

Rito wished.

For someone to help.

She has never prayed to god before so this was her first wish.

And that wish----reached.

The wind was sliced and a white blade was flying towards <<K>>.

The moment the red blade that was about to get swung down, got flicked away-----

“Ooooooooooooooohhhh!!”

A roar came above together with a fist.

<<K>> immediately took a great leap behind and dodged the attack before----

He grasped the intruder’s appearance and his sharp eyes slightly opened wider.

“Fu……fufu, hahahahaha!!”

Next, <K>> laughed loudly from the happiness filling inside him.

“You’ve come----Kokonoe Tooru!! Hahahahaha!!”

Part 2

We made it at the nick of time.

If we were even a second late then, the results would probably different.

While feeling cautious at <<K>>’s disgusting laugh, I talked to the fallen Tsukimi and Kibitsu, who was kneeling beside her.

“Are you okay, Tsukimi, Kibitsu!”

“Kokonoe-kun……sensei, sensei is……!”

“-----! Tsukimi, those wounds……!!”

“Yoo……..here you are taking the nice part……”

Tsukimi opened her eyes weakly.

I did not notice because I was desperate to protect them when I was running over here but, now that I take a good look, Tsukimi has suffered grave injuries.

Her sides were especially serious because it was gauged out.

Luckily or unluckily, the part gouged out was burned so, the blood flowing out isn't that serious.

Nonetheless, it's no mistake that her survival would be determined by our urgent attention to the wound.

"Sorry huh…….i said leave it to me, but, I ended up like this……."

"Is this even the time to say that! Stop talking, it's bad for your wound!!"

"Kuhah……..i never would have thought that you would worry about me……..now that's a shocking story……."

"Stop talking already. More importantly, we have to tend to your wounds……"

Those were words Tsukimi said maybe because she was aiming for our lives but, now I recognize her as a comrade that has been gone through days together.

"Kibitsu, can you stand?"

Kibitsu swung her head sideways at my question.

"So-sorry……I can't pour any strength into my knees……."

If possible, I wanted her to bring Tsukimi to the medical building but, it can't be helped since it was right after she tasted the fear of death.

Which means, I have to leave this to Julie or Tora------

"Fuun, I will take this woman. That's why I'll leave Tooru's support to you, Julie"

“Ya----. I understand.

He probably read my thoughts.

Killing his own will to fight together with us, Tora prioritized my need to save Tsukimi.

“Tora……”

“This woman’s condition requires immediate action. That’s why, I picked the fastest route”

“Sorry, Tora”

“Fuun, I am used to it. I’ve been with you for a long time after all”

After saying that, Tora added a [It really is ironic that I will be saving this woman in the first place huh] before carrying Tsukimi and gave Kibitsu a piggy back.

“O-i…….don’t you dare die……<<Irregular>>……no, Kokonoe, Tooru…….”

With a weak voice, Tsukimi opened her mouth.

“Yeah, I won’t die. So, don’t go dying on me”

“Ku-hah……..ill weeds grow apace…….”

While distorting her face in pain, Tsukimi gave a thumbs up and lifted the side of her mouth.

Tora started running and left the place.

In exchange with the dispersing footsteps, a disgusting laugh echoed in the place.

“Kuku, kuku, hahahaha. Is it okay if we end the drama farce already?”

“You sure are carefree to wait without doing anything”

I did not lower my cautiousness since I was wondering when he would attack but, there were no signs of him doing so.

Of course, that might be some kind of plan------

“Fufu. I was just thinking that you reuniting with their cold corpse would be more impactful”

The color of truth could be seen in <<K>>’s words.

Even though I don’t know what kind of reason he has, this man has a strong attachment of hatred towards me and is seeking a more tragic end.

“And Julie=Sigtuna. As the <<Duo>> of Kokonoe Tooru, let me present to you the classiest conclusion of your partner’s death……!”

“……your wish will never be granted. That’s because, Tooru-----“

“Yeah, I will not die. That’s because I vowed to protect Julie, everyone and myself!!”

I followed after Julie’s words and shouted at <<K>> while looking at him.

“Let’s end this, <<K>>! I will show you the <<Power>> of my <<Soul>> -----the <<Power>> of my will you reject!!”

“Fu,hahahahaha! Roar as much as you want, resist if you want!! Just wait till the moment I destroy your <<Soul>> with my <<PowerViolence>>!!”

<<K>> let out his ki filled with killing intent and hatred and changed the atmosphere.

What awaits; is the clash of our <<Power>>.

“He’s coming, Julie! Be careful!!”

“Ja---!!”

Red light was emitted from the wing behind <<K>> in response to us preparing ourselves-----

Suddenly, he Burst Attackcharged at us with a speed far exceeding our reactions even though we were cautious.

<<K>> instantly jumped into my chest area and swung his red blade-----

“Guh!!”

Kakiiiin!! Even though I blocked it immediately with my <<Shield>> I was unable to endure it and ended up getting blown away.

But, <<K>>’s momentum did not end with just blowing me away; he then continued on with a slash towards Julie behind him.

Julie jumped aside and dodged with a paper thin difference-------was what I thought but, the red blade slightly caught her uniform.

“Julie…….!!”

“……..Nai, It’s just my clothes”

While keeping <<K>> halted at the side of my view after he thrust through the spot we were just standing, I shouted towards Julie but she swung her head.

The attack only grazed her clothes and not wound her.

It’s not even a wound that might affect the battle.

However, i------we felt shock at <<K>>’s new found <<Power>> with just one attack.

“What speed…….!”

That charge which was so fast that even the <<Level 3III>> Yurie could not dodge; was still unexperienced in the many fights with the <<God’s Destruction soldierEll.Libel>> including <<K>>.

“Fufu, those are nice expressions you two are showing there”

<<K>> slowly turned around and made a joyful expression.

“That was a wonderful acceleration right? This one of the abilities of the <<God’s Destruction soldierEll.Libel>> External weapon----<<DestructionWings of death>>. And the red blade in my hand is also----“

“Is something from that <<DestructionWings of death>>”

Smile <<K>> consented after lifting the weapon covering the red blade to his chest. “There are other abilities too but, I’ll show them gradually. However----“

<<K>> crossed the blade glowing in red in front of his chest and said it to while looking at Julie instead of Tooru.

“That’s something I will do if you can last to the end while being burdened!!”

(-----!! Shit!!)

<<K>>’s target was not me, it’s Julie.

Because there’s a difference in <<Level>>, Julie’s physical ability is lower than the <<Level 4IV>> me.

With the initial attack, he found out that there is a difference in reaction speed by seeing the Julie behind me fails to dodge his attack.

“Julie!!”

The moment I was about to warn her, <<K>> sliced the wind and attack the silver girl.

Julie used her 2 blades to defend against the attacking 2 blades. The attack released at the same time clashed at the same time, <<K>> was faster at the following 2nd attack. Realizing that, Julie immediately stopped attacking and dodged a lethal attack by dropping to the ground.

However, she did not come out unharmed and it turned out like the first time-----no, it's slightly deeper.

The tip of his blade slightly cut her skin this time and blood splashed out at the night sky.

"It's just a scratch……..!"

Even though the silver girl frowned in pain, she stopped me from approaching her with her hand.

Once again, <<K>> aimed us----no, aimed Julie and went to attack her.

"Kuh, how cowardly…….!"

"In a battle, attacking the opponent's weak point is a standard measure! You're the fool for bringing someone weaker into the battle!!"

While making a scornful smile, it was clear what <<K>> was aiming.

He's probably trying to limit my range of tactics by immobilizing Julie first.

(Damn……..!!)

"Tooru!!"

Even though Julie told me to stop, I did not bother and moved to protect her.

But----it was a trap.

<<K>>, who was going to attack Julie, displayed the sharp maneuvering of a war machine and switched his target to me.

I was suddenly targeted and could not make it in time to guard the approaching red blade.

Even when I twisted my body, a straight side slash ran on my chest.

"-----Guh!!"

A scorching pain ran on the part of my sliced chest-------no, it was really scorched.

The glowing red blade holds burning properties and it can burn and slice the flesh at the same time.

However, I mustn't worry about that.

I turned around to find <<K>> flying at me like a hurricane-----and I doubted my eyes.

<<K>> was supposed to have dashed towards me to slash me but, he suddenly disappeared.

"Up, Tooru!!"

When I looked up after listening to the warning, <<K>> performed a somersault with movements resembling a war machine again-------

And back at the same direction, a strong attack was approaching me from behind because I turned away.

No matter how transcended I am from humans, I am still fundamentally humans-----that's why i will be an instant late to handle impossible movements.

That instant might be fatal but, this is a battle between people who transcended humans.

(No good, I can't dodge this……!!)

Dodging or blocking is normal here and, the timing for me to activate the <<Aegis Desire>> barrier is slightly off.

The moment I thought I was going to get killed-----

Giiin a silver light came between me and <<K>>.

She protected my back-----just like what she said, Julie deflected the red blade with her <<DoubleTwin blades>>.

“Hahahaha, I never would have thought that the burden will be the one blocking!!”

With his attack defended, <<K>> laughed loudly in mid-air.

Looking at that, I understood that the <<DestructionWings of death>> does not only have charging ability but also flying ability.

The girl glared at the winged man who was laughing loudly in the sky, and shouted

“You are free to call me a burden. But, I will still protect Tooru’s back!”

“Thanks for those strong words, Julie. But, I don’t think Julie as a burden at all. Rather, I think of you as my irreplaceable and trustworthy <<Duo>>”

“Ja---, thank you very much”

Without looking away from the enemy, I showed a small smile to the silver girl.

Yes, I am able to exist now thanks to her being here.

If not for my <<Duo>> called Julie, forget even getting <<Power>>, I wouldn’t be alive until today.

However, <<K>> was scorning at our deep bonds.

“Fufuu, what a wonderful bond……that’s why it’s worth breaking!!”

<<K>> suddenly descended to attack.

I blocked his blade and swung my fist upwards at the same time to cut through the sky.

Whenever <<K>> attempts to attack, he would literally fly up away from our reach-----he would then descend back down to attack.

His strategy of hit and run is a really annoying move to us uses close-combat as our main style.

“Kuh…….it doesn’t feel like fighting a human….!!”

Gaining the weapon <<DestructionWings of death>>, <<K>> was now displaying completely different movements compared to his counter style which he showed in the previous 2 fights.

Of course for the high speed flying charge; the sudden descend, sharp maneuvering, and the somersault which I was almost killed by, makes it feel like we are fighting a war machine with a human form.

“It’s true but------“

A high speed hit and run attack.

“Hahahaha, what’s wrong!? I had more of a hard time with Tsukimi Rito!”

Without losing his momentum, <<K>> rotated and ascended upwards before performing a U-turn to attack again; the moment he did that, Julie continued her mumbling.

“I am almost used to it”

The same time the red blade lightly scrapes her shoulders, Julie performed a counter and the tip of her blade scraped the <<Unit>>.

“Nice moves for someone who has inferior physicality!”

With the tip of his shoulders touched, <<K>> lifted the side of his mouth in irony at his prey’s resistance. “……..I am sorry, Tooru. I failed even after saying all that”

“N-no, don’t mind it. More importantly, how is your wounds…….?”

“I am okay”

After saying that, Julie lightly moved her shoulders.

While looking at her, I recalled back the counter she performed just now.

(She's amazing…….)

Conclusively, the attack ended in clear failure due to her unable to damage him and got lightly wounded.

However, I could only feel shock at Julie's senses she displayed during the middle of the fight.

Seeing through the attacks trajectory by increasing her concentration and counter him------putting it into words is easy but, repeating the attack regularly does not work on <<K>>.

In that small amount of time, she responded to movements she has not confronted before and a countered an attack that has hidden distinction between left and right with feints mixed into it; that's extremely hard even for me, who am higher in <<Level>>.

Being able to do that means, she has polished her skill through overcoming this battle of death.

However, it was bad that she did not end it with that attack, it's clear that <<K>> was cautious judging by the words he said next.

"Fufu, you really are wonderful to fill in the deference of physical ability with concentration. I take back calling you a burden-----but, because of that, I have to judge you as dangerous!"

The light blade disappeared from <<K>>'s hand and he pointed the tip at us.

"I'll slow down your movements and slowly kill you!!"

"----!! Julie!!"

Feeling cautious at the same time, Julie and I separated to left and right-----

The spot we were standing just now got blasted by several lights that could be described as light bullets.

“Damn it, it can turn to a gun too!!”

I predicted this to some point but, I still said it regardless.

It’s the prediction when I saw the 2 beams shooting down from the sky, when we were in front of the dorm.

But, judging by the huge explosion at that time, which was strong enough to form a crater, he might be saving at least one more of the << DestructionWings of death>>’s weapon at least; what’s more, it’s probably one that has tremendous power.

“Hahahaha, run around pathetically now!”

He was one-sidedly attacking from 10 meters above.

Unlike what happened until now, he would not come even for an instant close so we have no choice but to defend since we cannot counter him.

Our attacks might reach him if we jump but, as long as he is able to fly, he could easily dodge it and we might end up being targeted instead. There’s throwing our weapon at him but, we would probably lose a way to attack if we miss him.

Even though I was thinking that we have to do something about this, I have no choice but to direct my conscious to the unstopping attack and could not get any time to think.

“Not bad enduring but-----can you block this!?”

The 2 guns were shooting light bullets at us separately until now but-----

He pointed those muzzles only at me.

“------! Crap…….!!”

I blocked countless light bullets with my <<Shield>> because I knew I couldn't dodge.

The light bullets exploded at my <<Shield>> the moment it landed and I stopped the force with my leg.

Immediately after, countless more light bullets poured down since I was no longer allowed to move from the spot.

"<<Aegis Desire>>!!"

I judged that I could not block it and activated a barrier.

Countless explosions occurred when the barrier was touched------and after all of it were disposed, <<K>> rested his attack before looking down at me with a light smile.

"Fufu, it was really in my mind since the previous battle but, it really is quite the annoyance when you use it now that I see it again"

"<<K>>, this is something created by the will to protect someone which you called nonsense"

I erased the barrier and said it while thrusting my fist at <<K>>.

"You're annoying as usual huh……..by the way, I want to return back to the topic of your ability but, I found several interesting points"

"--------!?"

My heart jumped.

I was taken back with the thought "No way" because he saw through <<MjolnirThunder god's strike>> last time.

"First off, you can't use it immediately. You did not use it when I performed a Loop Attacksomersault attack and Julie Sigtuna had to come in between us; I can gain that possibility through seeing that"

"……."

He's half correct. There's a slight time lag when I activate the barrier with my mind.

Just like the battle before, I had to use it when I know bullet was being shot at me------basically, It's the feeling of deploying it through prediction.

The other activation method is that I have to point my hand at the target even though the barrier can be created in an instant. That's why; I can't make it in time for sneak attacks like the one just now.

"For the final number 3------this is still a speculation so, I'll leave that for later……..oops, being quiet is the same as admitting that I am correct, Kokonoe Tooru"

"Kuh…..!"

Regretfully, I can't handle this kind of mental attack.

(Calm down. It's not like the <<Aegis Desire>> was exposed. I just have to find a way to break the deadlock before it becomes useless…….!)

Even though I was gritting my teeth in the surface, I was thinking of a plan to attack <<K>> who was at an unreachable height.

(Our attacks can't reach. Julie can throw her <<Saber>> but, we would only lose a weapon if we miss…….no, wait?)

It's simple but, one plan came up.

Can that even be called a plan? It's something so simple that even I don't know.

"Julie!!"

I called out to the silver girl, and moved my sights to a certain object-----before running straight at it.

Julie understood my plan through my sights and ran too.

“Fumu, looks like you thought of something but----I won’t let you!!”

<<K>> prepared himself to barrage us with light bullets again but our actions were faster.

Towards our goal------the moment we reached a tree, Julie’s <<Saber>> formed a line and *Kiiin* a high-pitched sound echoed.

A trunk was cut off from the tree.

I carried the tree-----

And, threw it at <<K>> with all my strength.

“Wha…….!?”

The simplest of actions called throwing.

But, the power of the <<Level 4IV>> I became was out from the realm of common sense.

I threw a tree which was at a size impossible for a normal person to carry right at <<K>>.

“What a stupid move!!”

Explosions occurred one after another when light bullets hit the target, and <<K>> shot down the tree before it could reach him.

I looked at that while pulling out the root and threw it at him again.

“How annoying! Did you seriously think that such attack would hit!!”

“Nope, never thought of that. Even if it hits, you won’t receive any damage because of the <<Unit>> around you. But------“

“A dead angle was formed due to the explosion of the tree……..!”

“-----!!”

<<K>>, who was in mid-air looked up at the sky-----he saw the girl with Silver BlondeSilver hair in the night sky.

His timing of noticing Julie was slightly slower for him to shoot her down.

He would make it in time to guard but, it's okay.

Even if <<K>> doesn't get a direct slash, making him drop his gun or damaging his gun to the point of impracticality would make this simple plan a big success.

……..but, <<K>> immediately covered the gun body with the red light blade to block the swung white blade.

"Sad for you. It's the reversal of attack and defense with this"

<<K>> perform a kick at Julie. The silver girl who has already taken account of a counter attack at the point when her attack got defended, crossed her arms together and prevented a direct hit-----but, she distorted her expression because she was unable to kill off all the force.

"Okay then, I'll have you keep quiet here"

Her body got blown away just like that; he then turned the << DestructionWings of death>> back to a gun and aimed at her.

In the sky without any foothold, there's no way for her to dodge. Julie has knocked down several light bullets in this fight but, it's only limited to the explosions from the recoil.

"Julie------!!"

The moment he pulled the trigger.

I ran towards Julie while activating the <<Aegis Desire>> at its maximum radius.

But, she was still outside the barrier's radius.

I formed the <<Aegis Desire>> with me at the center but, it's not like I covered that much space even though it was at maximum output.

Naturally, as long as this is my own ability, I have already considered that event-------instead of protecting Julie, I deployed the <<Aegis Desire>> to trap <<K>> inside the barrier.

The barrier that can sever any attacks also has the same effect inside.

Because of that, the countless light bullets <<K>> shot did not reach Julie, and ended up causing several explosions inside the barrier.

"…….looks like you mastered it quite a bit but-----I will now ask you regarding the 3rd interesting point"

Without showing any care that he was obstructed by the barrier, <<K>> continued pulling the trigger and continued his words.

"Can the so-called <<Aegis Desire>> be deployed in ***several spots*** at the same time?"

(-------!! He thought of it as one possibility!!)

<<K>>'s comment wasn't wrong.

I can only deploy the <<Aegis Desire>> at one spot.

If I deploy the barrier to protect myself then, I will naturally end up forsaking Julie.

"Looks like you can't"

While shooting light bullets towards Julie, <<K>> directed a light smile at me and-----

He fixed one of the guns at me.

"Kuh……!!"

I noticed something at that moment.

I saw light concentrating at the muzzle which was different from when he fires light bullet.

Immediately, what appeared in my mind, was scene of the explosion I saw far away from the dorm and the beam that was fired at that moment------

(Crap……!!)

The beam of red light was fired at the same time I immediately jumped away.

The beam drilled into the ground------and caused an explosion after a slight delay.

Luckily, I was safe from a direct hit thanks to my fast reaction.

Within the blast, I looked up to the sky after falling on the ground and ended up kneeling down------I saw the gun that was pointed at Julie just now, was now pointed at me.

“Sever the fang----<<Aegis Desire>>!!”

I can make a new barrier since the attack towards Julie stopped.

The 2nd red light beams hit the barrier with full intentions to pierce through.

“Kuh……..what fire power…….!!”

PIshiii a high-pitch sound appeared and a crack was formed on the barrier.

Immediately after, the <<Aegis Desire>> broke and the beam of red light caused an explosion.

With the barrier destroyed, I could not block all the energy and ended up getting blown away by the after-wave.

Even when I collapsed on the ground, I stood up immediately in alert for another attack and looked up at the sky but------

“Eh……!?”

<<K>> wasn’t there.

“Tooru, in front!!”

Julie’s warning came flying but, I turned unguarded when I lost sight of <<K>>, making my reaction slower.

The <<God’s Destruction soldierEll.Libel>> with sharp eye’s-----<<K>> flew out in high-speed from the dust of clouds caused by the explosion and pierced my body with the blade glowing in red.

“Tooooooruuuuuuuuu!!”

My name echoed into the night sky with a painful shout.

“Ku-kuku, hahahaha. Finally, Kokonoe Tooru……..! With your death, I can make Julie Sigtuna witness the death of someone precious and carve a wound that will corrode her heart for eternity…….!!”

<<K>> said that with a distorted face of joy.

In front of his expression and his words, i------

“Ah……huh, ah…….”

My body trembled from the scorching pain.

With my trembling hands, and numbing fingers, I grabbed the arm <<K>> was holding the red blade with----

But my movements stopped because of the hot substance rising from the depth of my throat.

“Gah, kahah…….!”

I could not breath for a while, making me cough out red blood that tasted like iron rust.

Splash, <<K>> in front of me had his <<Unit>> dirtied with blood.

“Fu, fufu, hahahahahaha, Haa---hahahaha!!”

<<K>> laughed in front of me.

Even though he was doing it right in front of me-----his laugh felt somewhat distant.

My consciousness was cut off.

“-------Ru! Tooru! Tooru!!”

When I opened my eyes, Julie was spilling tears while calling my name.

“……..Ju-lie…….?”

Her Ruby eyesred eyes opened wide after calling my name like she was squeezing it out.

“Tooru!!”

(……Why are you crying?)

My memories won’t stabilize.

Why-------

My question won’t get answered.

I was having hard time breathing, and my thoughts won’t get in order.

My view was blurry-----

And my consciousness was fading.

(No good…….i have to stay conscious……..or else……)

Julie will remain sad if I don't open my eyes.

Although I know that------

My consciousness fell deeper into the darkness.

"Tooooooooooru!"

……..----------!!"

A sound echoed in the darkness.

That's----a voice.

A laugh.

Someone was laughing.

When I realized that, I started waking up.

(Who……..?)

Even when I opened my eyes, my view was blurry like my thoughts and I could not find out who the voice belongs to.

At that moment, I saw something silver swaying right beside me, other than the laugh.

Silver BlondeSilver hair -----

It's Julie, my <<Duo>>.

After my consciousness cleared up, the scene shown in my eyes turned clear too-------

I gasped.

Julie was consciously the same word over and over again.

“Tooru, Tooru, Tooru, Tooru, Tooru, Tooru, Tooru, Tooru, Tooru……”

(What’s wrong Julie……..why are you making that face……..)

I could see nothing was shown in her wide opened Ruby eyesred eyes.

I then noticed something.

I noticed the existence of a man laughing loudly while looking down at Julie.

(-----<<K>>!)

The <<God’s Destruction soldierEll.Libel>> was lost in mad joy and was laughing continuously.

(Oh yeah…….I was…….!)

My memories came back when I saw <<K>>.

The memories of us fighting against <<K>> who assaulted the academy.

The memories of <<K>> stabbing the red blade in his hand in the fight.

I don’t know for how long but, it seems that I lost consciousness.

Julie probably received tremendous shock seeing me like that.

That’s because she mixed the scene with her father’s t death.

“……..Ju…….e…….”

My voice won’t come out.

My body won't move.

Julie was continuously calling my name not even 1 meter away-----

Suddenly, she stopped.

(Ju-lie…….?)

The silver girl slowly looked up at the empty sky-----and mumbled.

"Won't……..forgive……never……"

And from the silver girl-------

A sound started screeching.

Ki……..iii……iiiiiiiiii…….iiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii--------!!

A high-pitch sound that would make anyone cover their ears, echoed.

(This sound……it's that times-------)

Yes, this is the sound I heard when we fought <<K>> on the boat last time.

"I will never…….I will never…….! I WILL NEVER FORGIVE YOU……..!!"

Kiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii----------!!

The shout of hatred mixed with the sound being produced from Julie's body.

"Aa……A-ah…….AaaaaaaaAAAaaaAAAAAAaaaAAAA----------!!"

Bikiiiiiiiiiiiin!!

Together with the sound of chains torn into pieces, Julie shouted.

She did so like a wolf howling while looking up at the sky.

The sound then disappeared.

Forget the high-pitch sound, even <<K>>'s laugh was included too.

Julie slowly stood up in an unbalance manner.

"……..do you call this a battle for revenge? But, I am not interested in going through that though-----"

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA----------!!"

Julie howl interrupted <<K>>.

Next, <<K>>----and also me, opened our eyes wide in Julie's weird change.

Because *Goooou*!! <<Flames>> were pouring out from her small body.

Because the <<Flame>> was black in color.

Unlike the <<Crimson red>> when manifesting the <<Blaze>> or the <<Azure flame>> which is the form after overcoming a wall------it was <<Black flame>>.

The color of the <<Flame>> which signifies anger and hatred swirled around the silver girl.

Julie grabbed the <<Black Flame>>.

The <<Flame>> changed its shape-----and turned into the <<DoubleTwin blades>>.

It's the <<Blaze>> that I was familiar with.

Even so, something was different.

The <<DoubleTwin blades>> which was giving the same dull color as her eyes, was giving off an ominous feel.

"That <<Flame>>……..Julie Sigtuna, what did you do……..!?"

It's not the <<DoubleTwin blades>>.

<<K>> showed his agitation in front of the ominous presence Julie was giving off.

But-----no answer was given.

In replacement for the answer, Julie jumped at <<K>>.

(-----Fast!!)

Until now----no, she's even faster than me, who has a higher <<Level>>.

<<K>> barely dodged a slash that has the speed which rivals the <<DestructionWings of death>>'s charging speed, by jumping behind.

However, he was unable to completely dodge it and ended up leaving a cut on his cheek. "Kuh, this is….!?"

Julie attacked <<K>> who was shocked, in a flash. The white blade which slashed horizontally in the air was regretfully blocked by the red blade-----but, Julie just pushed on.

<<K>>'s body was greatly fling backwards.

Even if <<Exceeds>> have powers exceeding the limits of humans, I was dumbfounded when I saw the <<Level 3III>> girl perform a heavy attack which was so strong that it flung an <<God's Destruction soldierEll.Libel>> wearing the <<Unit>>.

With a distance formed, the wind brushed Julie's Silver BlondeSilver hair as she rushed towards <<K>> again.

To me, it looked like a silver wolf hunting its prey.

"I don't know what you are hiding but, I will have you stay quiet here!!"

The <<DestructionWings of death>> behind <<K>> emitted a propulsion force opposite to the direction he was flung to, allowing him to safely fix his posture before changing the sword to the gun.

He pulled the trigger at the silver wolf- Julie with its fangs out.

Countless light bullets attacked instead.

(She can't dodge that…….!!)

It's still okay if she focused on dodging by running around like just now; but as long as she's charging right into the light bullets, she has no other options but to hit down all the bullets with her <<DoubleTwin blades>>.

Even with that move, it's probably still impossible to block all of them-----<<K>> should be thinking this too.

But, Julie dodged it.

Without allowing even one bullet landing on her, she dodged through the meteor storm of light bullets, and reached the range for her <<DoubleTwin blades>>.

"I-impossible…….!?"

With all the light bullets dodged, <<K>>'s expression was in pure shock.

However, he still was able to block the storm of slashes by changing <<DestructionWings of death>> into sword mode.

1, 2, 3 attacks-----<<K>> blocked and diverted those speedy sword attacks before it could even reach his body. The scene of him responding with his original defensive style, made me reluctantly remember how he toyed with us on the boat.

But-----Julie, who currently was bringing forth a <<Power>> that could only be described as unusual, was continuously performing breathtaking chain attacks without any care of his iron defense.

"Guh, kuh…….no way, I am being pressured…….!!"

In front of that overwhelming strength, the teenager that was laughing loudly, distorted his face and looked anxious.

<<K>>'s responses were starting to get slower to handle her swinging fangs------

"AaaAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!"

Julie accelerated even more and swung her sword with the howl of a beast-----

His iron defense was getting destroyed.

He could not make it in time to defend; the blade of the <<Saber>> sank into the part of the weapon that does not have the blade of red light resulting it to be cut splendidly in half. The weapon that could change into gun and sword mode exploded and illuminated the surroundings.

"Da-mn you!!"

<<K>> retreated.

It wasn't a strategy, it just plainly because he was completely overpowered.

Red light was emitted out from the wing giving him the ability to make distance from Julie by flying to the sky.

By running to a position where her fangs won't reach, the silver girl that resembles a silver wolf, glared at <<K>> with a sharp gaze.

"Fufuu, to think that you were hiding such a <<Power>>……..but, that ends here. No matter how little of my life is left, the corrosive wound in your heart made by losing someone in front of you, will turn lighter if you manage to get your revenge"

He probably thinks I am dead.

My <<Shield>> disappearing when I fainted made was even more convincing.

After <<K>> said it in satisfaction, he continued his words of scorn.

“How regretful it is, Julie Sigtuna. Kokonoe Tooru wouldn’t be dead if you brought out that <<Power>> in the first place…….if possible, can you please tell me your current feelings about it! Kuku hahahahaha!!”

“Uu……”

Julie groaned.

No, it’s different.

“UuuAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA------!!”

I knew she howled.

Words won’t reach Julie now.

The groan just now was not meant for his words but rather it was because she was pissed that <<K>> won’t come down from a height she can’t reach.

That’s why Julie roared, because she chose to move instead.

Which means-----she’s jumping.

She bent her knees, lowered her body, *glared* at her target-----and kicked the ground.

“How foolish! Have you forgotten that the sky is my territory!!”

<<K>> pointed his remaining gun at Julie and laughed.

It’s just as he says. Unlike <<K>> who can fly freely in the sky thanks to <<DestructionWings of death>>’s function, Julie can only jump straight up and fall right down after reaching the peak point.

He pulled the trigger and shot several light bullets.

Naturally, the number was lower compared to when he had two guns but, Julie cannot perform her god-like dodging skill like what she displayed just now because there’s no foothold for her in the sky.

She will get shot down.

After the instant I thought that----***Julie kicked the air***.

“Wha……..!?”

I, and <<K>> got surprised and doubted our eyes.

However, Julie unmistakably kicked the air and dodged the incoming light bullets before----

She kicked the air again.

“Impossible!? You----“

She changed the angle and approached <<K>> again.

“What are you----Julie Sigtuna!!”

While shouting, <<K>> continuously fired light bullets but, Julie repeatedly kicked the air to dodge them all.

And-----

Gikiiiinn!! She slashed upwards diagonally and knocked his gun upwards-----

Next off, the left sword made the same path like the first attack and cut the <<Unit>>.

The silver girl danced in the moon light and splashed the sky in red.

I thought that scene looked magical even though we were in a fight.

But, it all happened in one instant.

The seriously injured <<God’s Destruction soldierEll.Libel>> fell down. Right before <<K>> was about to slam to the ground, he activated the wing’s power and avoided hitting the ground.

At that moment, Julie assaulted him as if she beat the <<DestructionWings of death>> at its own game.

Dodging that attack by jumping behind, <<K>> fired his strongest attack---the Ether cannon at Julie when she landed. Until now, <<K>> attacked Julie in a way that won't kill her but, he had no choice but to judge that it's not the situation for that anymore.

(Please dodge, Julie-----!!)

My voiceless wish reached her.

The red beam pierced through the air Julie stood but, she already disappeared from the place and----

Her white sword destroyed the gun which was a cluster of metal.

<<K>> lost his entire weapon with this.

His only hand left is to find a chance to fly to the sky and pray that Julie won't chase him.

However, Julie who's howling in anger will not allow any retreat.

<<K>> staggered when his shoulder was slammed with the blade.

At that moment, Julie unleased an endless attack which could be described as a storm of silver flash by kicking both the air and ground.

She does not look like human and looked like a wolf with silver fur instead.

Yes, Julie currently looked like a beast which had its shackles of chains released.

Right after the end of her endless attack, <<K>> fell to his knees.

Even though he avoided a critical wound thanks to the dense part of his armor, the battle has already concluded judging by the cuts formed everywhere in the <<Unit>>.

The only thing remaining was to finish him with her fangs to end the fight.

But-----

“No……Ju-lie……..”

I said it in the agonizing pain.

Of course, it won’t reach Julie if it doesn’t sound like my voice.

Even so, I repeated “No” one more time.

It’s because Julie was about to kill <<K>>.

<<K>> was ***suffering injuries*** by attacks coming from her <<Blaze>>.

Just like how Miyabi was when she was controlled by <<K>>, Julie was swinging her <<Blaze>> now with killing intent.

(Please stop it, Julie……..!)

I thought this while looking at Julie standing in front of <<K>> who was breathing heavily and had already fallen to his knees.

Julie was angry for me, and was about to <<K>> for it.

Even though I understand that, I strongly wished.

<<K>> is the enemy.

If she let him go, he would probably come back to spread death like what happened in the previous battle.

That’s why, I also tried to kill <<K>>.

But even so, right now, I wish from the bottom of my heart that Julie would stop swinging her sword and to kill.

No, it isn’t limited to now.

I don't want her small hand to be covered in blood in the upcoming future.

Even if the blood comes from her father's killer she's chasing.

My wish was contradicting.

It's a contradiction that I don't want a fellow <<Avenger>>-Julie to kill anyone even though I wish to get revenge for my sister.

(I know this my egoism……! But even so----)

I squeezed out my remaining strength to move my body.

If <<K>> dies here then there is no going back.

That's why I have to stop the silver girl.

I supported my body with my trembling arm and looked up while making a wish.

(But even so----I don't want Julie to kill anyone!!)

"Uu-oo…..oooooOOOOOOHH!!"

I stood up while roaring---and ran.

While running, I brought forth the <<Azure flame>> and manifested my <<Shield>>.

(Julie, I want to protect you……..! I want to protect your heart……!!)

Images of the silver girl that I acquainted with and passed these 4 months with as her <<Duo>>, ran around my mind like a revolving lantern.

The girl with Silver BlondeSilver hair, Ruby eyesred eyes, and Snow whitewhite skinhad little words to say, is lonely, wants to be pampered, she might be a little blank but, she's really honest and is a girl that I want to protect more than anyone else.

That happy smile she made when we drank apple tea together----

I felt I might lose that smile…….

That's why I ran.

While looking at the <<Blaze>> slowly lifted up.

"Julie's----"

I stood in front of the silver girl and changed my wish to <<Power>>.

"Sever Julie's fang----<<Aegis desire>>!!"

The <<Power>> of my unleased <<Shield>> blocked the white blade.

"Why……."

Bakiiiiiiii!! Our <<Soul>> clashed and the violent impact formed a gust around our surroundings-----

"Why would you protect me!? Kokonoe Tooru-----!!"

Almost at the same time <<K>> shouted, the <<Saber>> flung off her hand due to the violent impact caused by clashing with the barrier.

But, it's not over yet.

"U-Aaa-aaAaaAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA----!!"

Julie howled again and swung her remaining fang ***at me***.

"Julie, enough……! It's enough!!"

I stepped forth while shouting and hugged the small body of the silver girl.

"I am not dead! I am alive so you have no reason to kill this guy!! So please-----come back. Come back to the Julie I know……"

"Too…….ru…….?"

Together with my name coming out from her mouth, the <<Blaze>> fell off Julie's hand and light returned into her Ruby eyesred eyes.

"Yeah, it's me"

I nodded and patted Julie's head.

Gently, on her silky Silver BlondeSilver hair.

"Tooru…….Tooru……..!"

Julie buried her face into my chest.

But----

The battle wasn't over.

"Fu, fufu, hahaha……what a farce to show. On top of that, I never would have imagine that I would receive the humiliation of getting saved by you, Kokonoe Tooru…….!!"

While placing his hands on a tree further away, <<K>> horribly distorted his face in anger and was glaring at us hugging each other.

"…….i don't remember saving you. I only moved to stop Julie"

I let go off Julie and looked at <<K>> before stating the truth.

"No matter what reason you have, it's fact that I was saved by you in the end. This is exactly what puking means!! That's why I won't forgive you! Even if it took this long to get saved, it's already too late!!"

"Late? I don't know what you are talking about but, what are you planning to do from now on? You still want to fight? You have no more weapons, and that <<Unit>> probably isn't operational judging by that state"

With many spots cut, sparks would sometimes appear on the <<Unit>> that <<K>> wore and i can see that he is not denying the fact that it's un-operational.

“You no longer have the <<Power>> to fight…….! Quietly surrender!”

Forget even fighting, <<K>> does not even have the ability to run away.

I judge that by seeing him standing up with a staggering body and, the <<DestructionWings of death>> behind him broken thanks to the storm of silver flash Julie performed.

However, I found myself mistaken.

“Kuku, I don’t have <<Power>>……..? You have no idea how wrong you are, Kokonoe Tooru!! Let me show you the last <<Power>> dwelling in the <<DestructionWings of death>>!!”

The remaining 2 wings, joined together in response to <<K>>’s words.

<<K>> took up the 2 giant guns and aimed with his hips.

“Behold, this is the final weapon left in the <<DestructionWings of death>>----the Twin Ether cannon. By shooting simultaneously, this beauty can double the output of the ether cannon…….!!”

Hyuuuuiiii……..together with the sound of a motor, the amount of red light concentrated at the muzzle which was incomparable to before.

“Doubled huh…….I know it’s one heck of power just hearing it but----“

It has the power far exceeding the Ether cannon which I could not block even with the <<Aegis Desire>>----meaning, even if I make a barrier, forget life, our body will be obliterated without leaving any piece.

“Do you think you can easily hit us?”

There’s no way we can’t dodge it if we focused on dodging.

And all we have to do is to destroy the <<DestructionWings of death>> before the 2nd shot.

However, <<K>> made a light laugh because my thoughts were within his calculations.

“No, you two can’t dodge it. You should be able to understand if you think where my gun is directed. It’s because you ***think of your friends*** a lot, Kokonoe Tooru……..!”

“-----!”

After saying that, I knew what <<K>> was aiming.

The muzzle was definitely aimed towards us.

But, 100 meters behind us----there’s the dorm.

Basically, <<K>> is saying that we will be seeing everyone to their death if we dodge it.

Of course, even if we try to destroy the gun, he would probably be faster to pull the trigger.

“Okay then, let’s go with a straight-on simple competition of the <<Violence>> and <<Soul>> for the finally”

<<K>> made a sadistic smile and said that.

He knows that we can’t dodge and block so he went and said straight-on competition; what a hypocrite.

“……Okay, I’ll accept it like what you wanted. Julie, get away”

Thinking of the worst outcome, i asked the silver girl to get away to avoid dragging the her into this in concern but-----

“Nai, I refuse”

Julie swung her head sideways.

“Julie……..”

“Those who have bonded, must use their utmost ability to stay together---whether it’s through happiness or sadness or being healthy; until the day death separates us…….!”

That’s one line regarding the <<Duo>> written in the school rules.

I thought that one line was over exaggerated when I first looked at it but, just now, Julie said that line with the determination to be together with me.

“I am your <<Duo>> so I will be together to the end. So-----“

“Yeah, you’re right. This isn’t the end. That’s why I will protect you and live through this battle!!”

“Ja--. Please---protect me, Tooru”

“I will!!”

Julie grabbed my right hand tightly with her small hands.

Our strongly connected hands are the proof of our <<Bonds>> we raised up until now.

After we nodded, we looked at the man that is about to fire the fangs of evil------and I thrust the <<Shield >> on my left hand towards <<K>>.

“I will protect Julie with my <<Power>>!! So, Julie use your <<HeartSoul>> to protect me!!”

“Ja---!!”

As the target of our sights, <<K>> made a scornful gaze with his sharp eyes right back at us.

“……..my idea was to allow Julie Sigtuna to live and live in pain though”

“I have no interest in letting you succeed in that”

“Yes, it seems that is the case. I never would have thought you two would promise to protect each other in front of an absolute <<PowerViolence>> that is impossible to block or dodge------my feelings has crossed through passion, and now I feel pity for you two……”

“……..<<K>>, your denial of the will to protect is endless I see. If so then, i------will deny your <<PowerViolence>> with the <<Power>> created from <<Bonds>>!!”

“Then I will deny the <<Power>> of the <<Soul>>--the <<Power>> of your <<Bonds>>, by erasing both of your life’s legacy without leaving any trace left!!”

He pressed the trigger.

“This is the end, Kokonoe Tooru!! Julie Sigtuna!!”

The evil and hostile fang concentrated on the 2 guns was turned into a giant red light before fired.

“<<K>>!! I will tell you one last thing! It’s true that I cannot deploy the <<Aegis Desire>> at multiple places but------It’s not like I can’t deploy it simultaneously!!”

I unleased all my remaining <<Power>> and roared.

“Sever the fang---<<Three for all Aegis>>!!”

I focused on one pot and deployed it there; <<K>> then distorted his face when he say the layers of barrier.

“Wha!? The barriers----are layered!?”

A 3 layered barrier was created to protect our life from the red fangs that was approaching.

The torrent of powerful energy shook the air, earth and cracked the barrier.

Within our view covered in red-----

I used everything I got to preserve the <<Three for all Aegis>>, and continued to resist his <<PowerViolence>> .

“Guh- kuh, uguh……!!”

The red fang clashed with the barrier but, my stamina and metal strength were quickly depleting.

(C-crap……)

My view turned blur for a moment.

Even though I immediately came back, I could focus properly again.

Although I was in front of a torrent of glowing red energy, my view was turning darker.

My body which was wounded seriously by the red blade was able to stand up by forcing myself mentally.

But even that mental strength, was quickly depleted because I had to continuously preserve the <<Three for all Aegis>> 3 layer activation.

(Kuh…….Is this my limit…….!)

Sweat flowed down my fingers, my breathing turned wilder and my body was losing heat----

My fingers then turned colder and were turning numb.

But------

There was something warm from my right hand.

(This is…….)

Julie was holding gripping my hand harder.

“Ju-lie……!”

“Tooru, I believe you. I believe that you won’t die-----and that you will definitely protect me…….!”

The silver girl smiled.

There was no anxiety there.

She only had the feeling of believing in me.

“That’s, right….i……will protect you……..!!
Uuuuooooooooaaa AAAA-----!!”

The eye blinding explosion, and the ear bursting sound, swallowed everything.

Soon, the dust cleared up and------

We were standing there safely.

“I-impossible…..Why…..Why are you still alive……?”

<<K>>’s sharp eyes opened widely and was desperately trying to deny the reality in front of him.

“I probably wouldn’t be able to resist if I was alone…….this is because Julie was with me------this is because the <<Bond>> I have with Julie gives me <<Power>>……..!!”

“Just how far……just far is a man like you……..Kokonoe Tooru-----!!”

After he shouted my name like a chanting a curse, <<K>> pointed the <<DestructionWings of death>> at us again.

I was seriously injured and have fully depleted all my <<Power>> from using the <<Three for all Aegis>> so; I am not able to block the next Twin Ether Cannon.

At the same time, I don’t have any spare energy to use a move that can defeat <<K>> in one hit----the <<MjolnirThunder god’s strike>>.

That's why I let go of the silver girl's hand and headed to her <<Soul>>---after I pulled out the <<Blaze>> stabbed into the ground, I shouted while running.

"Julie, let me borrow your <<PowerSoul>>!! We will sever <<K>>'s <<HeartSoul>>!!"

"Ja--!!"

Ever since that day-----ever since Otoha was killed, I resisted holding a sword.

Because I thought a sword is something evil that takes the lives of people.

But, the <<Blaze>> in my hand now is different.

The <<Soul>> of the silver girl that will strongly answer to my words, will not take anyone's life away. That's why I am able to swing this fang with all my might.

And perform the final attack to end this battle.

"This is the end, <<K>>-----!!"

"Kokonoe Tooru-----!!"

The moment <<K>> was about to pull the trigger, a sword flash glittered slightly faster than him-----

And I, cut down the <<DestructionWings of death>> and <<K>>'s <<Soul>>.

Chapter 3 『I Will, Someday』

Part 1

“Kuh…….”

It has been a few days after the battle with <<K>>; I woke up from the sharp headache.

…….Well, I only knew this fact a little later from now.

(I-is this…….the medical building……..)

This isn’t something I am proud off but, I knew this immediately because I often come here.

That’s why immediately understanding that I am alive through that is just a little ironic.

At that time----

<<K>> collapsed after I slashed him with the <<Soul>>.

Immediately after, the security guards showed up as if they were waiting for that moment.

I realized that the battle ended with that event happening and Julie calling my name was the last thing I remember before everything went blank; this is my current state.

“Hn……..”

After I slowly raised my body while pressing my hurting head, I heard someone reply.

When I looked over to the direction of the voice, I saw the silver girl sleeping at the edge on the bed.

(She was taking care of me the whole time huh……..)

I don’t know how long has passed since the fight with <<K>> but, I know that Julie was beside me the whole time.

I was happy of her feelings and felt apologetic at the same time.

(Thanks Julie……)

I gently patted her with appreciation on her sleepy head.

……..and at that moment.

“Ouch……..”

My head had a sharp pain again.

It was the headache that was the reason why I woke up but-----

“Too……..ru?”

The headache woke Julie up this time instead of me.

“Opps, Sorry, Julie. I guess I woke you up”

“Nai……..don’t worry about------.

Her sentence was cut off while she was scratching her eyes before Julie looked at my face blankly.

Her Ruby eyesred eyes got teary-----

[Tooru!!] [Gofuu]

The silver girl jumped into my chest.

“Ah……are you okay, Tooru……..?”

“Y-yeah……..it hurts a little though…….”

“I am really sorry……err, I jumped in reflex because I was happy…….”

I pat Julie’s head when she dropped her shoulders, and told her don’t worry about it.

“Tooru……thank you”

She’s probably still worrying about it.

Even though Julie was smiling softly, her eyebrows were still slanting downwards, making a troubled expression.

“You really don’t have to worry about it, Julie”

“J-Ja---……..”

While patting her head, I remembered something about Julie.

The weird phenomenon that happened in the fight with <<K>>---

Just like what happened during the seaside school, a high-pitched sound was coming out from Julie.

What’s more, there’s a sound of something breaking and the <<Power>> Julie showed after that was very different.

Obviously for her extreme speed, the apparent <<Power>> to---kick the sky, is something even the existence that transcends humans-<<Exceed>> can do.

However, it’s a different story if they crossed through <<Level 4IV>> and pull out the true <<Power>> of the <<Blaze>>.

But, Julie is still <<Level 3III>>-----

“Tooru……?”

Since I was thinking while placing my hand on Julie’s head, she looked up at me wondering what’s up.

“The << Power ability >> you showed last time-----I was just wondering what’s that”

“That huh……..”

Julie’s expression turned cloudy again.

That’s because she doesn’t know that <<Power>> herself too.

Adding on, it's only natural that she used an even weirder <<Power>> compared to before.

"……Tooru, i……."

Julie lifted her face after a moment of silence but her words cut off half-way.

I can see anxiety in her Ruby eyesred eyes.

"……..Don't worry about it. You can't do anything about something you don't know"

"Tooru……."

I *Pon**Pon* hit Julie's head when she was making a sunken expression, swung my head telling her it's okay before my head started to hurt a little.

"Does your wound hurt, Tooru?"

"No, it's just a headache……..it's probably from overusing the <<Aegis Desire>>"

It's just my speculations but, that's probably it.

During the battle, the <<Aegis Desire>> converts the <<Power>> of the <<Soul>> to energy so, I will get more tired the more I use it.

Especially for this time; I activated it to its limit making it unavoidable to get a headache from the fatigue.

"Well, I'll recover after some rest. More importantly, will you tell me what happened after that?"

"……Ja---"

After that, I asked Julie about the end of the fight.

She told me that several passed since the fight and that Tsukimi managed to survive and is now in the emergency room. And-----she had no clue on what happened to <<K>> after he was apprehended by the security guards.

“I see…….”

I mumbled, after hearing the end.

The fight with <<K>> ended.

Oddly enough I was quite convinced that I will never see him ever again.

Our peaceful days are sure to come back this time.

But-----

The me of that time had no idea that a new fight was already right at the corner.

And---a fight started.

[Tooru] [Tooru-kun]

Lilith and Miyabi’s voice joined together, and apples were brought to me from both sides.

“”Here, Ahhn””

“”……..””

Both of them looked at each other unanimously but, they immediately looked back at me with a smile.

“Err…….”

[Tooru] [Tooru-kun]

""Here, Ahhn""

"------Wait, why trying to act like you're Tooru's lover, Miyabi!?"

"Th-that's well……"

Miyabi had trouble replying back to the gold girl's demand of an explanation.

On the 2nd night after I woke up, everyone were already back from their home visit.

When they got back to the dorm, everyone was shocked by what Tora explained regarding the <<K>> attack and everyone came during today's visitor hours-----not only Miyabi, Lilith were there, Tora, Tachibana and Tatsu also came together to visit; everything was well until that point though.

Ever since the moment I brought up my empty stomach, some weird events happened to this point and---it connected to the girl's fight.

"L-lilith-san is doing it too so, I thought I can too……."

Lilith brushed her Yellow Topazblonde hair with her hand before replying to the timid Miyabi.

[Oh my, Tooru is my future husband. So---] [Nai] [-----it's only natural to feed……wait, you shut up!]

There goes Lilith's honest retort and Julie's interrupting denial.

"Anyway, that's it. So, let me handle this"

But, Miyabi swung her head to the sides.

“Li-lilith-san is really beautiful, rich, and good in sports and studies, strong too……..I feel really envious of you but------that’s not decided yet…….”

“What isn’t decided yet?”

“Uuu……well that’s……”

A question flew over to Miyabi this time and made her sights move to the hand riding on her lap.

Miyabi gripped her skirt tightly before taking a deep breath before----

Lifting her face and looked straight at the gold girl.

“If it’s the future then, there’s a possibility that I would be married with Tooru-kun too……..!!”

“Wha!?”

Immediately, not only Lilith but everyone in the room focused on Miyabi who made the explosive remark.

“Ah……errr, well……..t-that’s it…….”

Miyabi’s face turned red from the sights and looked back down again.

The first person who regained composure from the explosive remark was the main cause----Lilith.

“Now you’ve said it, Miyabi. Nonetheless, you won’t be able to be my rival. That’s because----“

Pii The gold girl pointed at herself with her thumbs and told this.

“We kissed!”

“…….You did that on your one accord”

Nice come-back, Tora.

"I slept with Tooru too!"

"……..if it's about the seaside school; didn't you just slip into their tent as you like?"

Nice follow, Tachibana.

"I went with Tooru to Death new land DNL on a date!!"

"At that time, Ojou-sama forcefully made him go with you by giving him a condition"

Oooh, an unbelievable follow up from Sara……

"A-anyway, we are getting closer in time. You better have the determination to come in between us right?"

Even though she was retorted back many times, Lilith still made a fearless face and pointed at herself.

But today's Miyabi----no, the Miyabi after the firework competition is different.

"I-I won't lose if it's the feeling of liking Tooru-kun!"

Forget getting scared of Lilith, she stood up and shouted.

"Also, I am very intimate with Tooru-kun too……! I work hard with Tooru-kun every morning, Tooru-kun said that I was his first, it was my first time too, and, errr, Tooru-kun work hard with Tomoe-chan every morning too but, he would do it with me once a week!"

We go for morning runs every morning, we went to our first dates, and although I work hard training in the morning with Tachibana every day, I would run with her once in a week.

Once she left out the running, date, and morning practice, it becomes one heck of a misunderstanding……..

Thanks to that, the medical room returned back to silence------

Tachibana was the one that broke the atmosphere.

“Ko-Ko-Ko-Kokonoe------!! W-w-what perverted things have you done with Miyabi!! What’s more, every day with me-----!? I misjudged you, you wolf-----!!”

“No no no, wait a second there, Tachibana----!! Don’t you find your own words any weird at all----!!”

Equal to Miyabi, Tachibana’s face turned red and made loud sounds before running out from the room.

Judging by that; my voice didn’t reach her at all.

(Help me out here, Tora!!)

I told him through eye contact.

(This is a battle you encountered. It’s unreasonable for me to pry into)

Immediately shot down.

Furthermore, it seems that Julie could not understand Miyabi’s sentence while Tatsu was laughing loudly as usual; looks like none of them are going to be helping.

(Someone, do something-----!!)

Even when I was shouting in my heart, Lilith and Miyabi’s fight was still ongoing making it feel like the headache a few days to come back.

“Fu-fufu……not bad; for doing something behind my back……but, Tooru will end up choosing me”

“T-that’s---“

“No, it has been decided. Listen here, Miyabi. No matter what kind of relationship you have with Tooru now, males will end up choosing the charming girls. And even will all your charm, I exceed all of it. That’s why Tooru choosing me as his final woman is the most natural thing to do!!”

Lilith’s fingers were pointed at Miyabi again and I thought I heard a *Bishii* super effective sound effect.

Funyon.

“Hyauu?”

The gold girl’s finger sunk into Miyabi’s the soft big bulge and made her give out a cute scream.

Lilith kept quiet there for some reason.

“……..”

*Funyon**funyon**funyon**funyon*

Lilith’s finger was poking into Miyabi’s breast, making it jiggle.

“Hyawawa, Li-lilith-san……..!?”

While Miyabi was panicking because she could not understand Lilith’s actions, Lilith’s shoulders dropped and she mumbled.

“……t-to think that I tasted the sense of defeat……..”

You can’t do anything about it.

“Fu-fufu……fu……..”

After recovering from the shock of defeat, (Broken?) Lilith pointed at Miyabi and declared this.

“Okay. I will accept you, Miyabi! You are from now on my rival!!”

“Eh? Ah, err……..u-un! I won’t lose if it is regarding Tooru-kun……!”

A miraculous rival relationship was born here.

“Okay then, first thing first, we will have Tooru decide who he wants to feed him. Okay, Miyabi?”

“U-un. It’s fair if Tooru-kun chooses so I am okay with it. Err, Tooru-kun can you pick?”

“…….eh, me?”

Both of them nodded at the same time.

“Errrrr……”

In the end, I picked ~~the <s>escape route~~ the peaceful way to solve this by letting them both feed me.

“Tooru, are you awake?”

On a certain afternoon, almost a week after the battle with <<K>>.

Even though it should be class time now, Lilith showed up at my medical room.

“Aah, I am……are you ditching class?”

“Why not. I don’t need to take general subjects anyway”

That’s one leisure sentence; if its academics then, she can easily top over the school level.

I want to share her academic abilities if possible.

"How's your condition?"

"I am thinking of heading back to my room and change before showing up in the afternoon class……well, I am really just going to show my face only though"

Since my wounds stabilized------(thanks to recovery enhancement from the <<Luciful>>)----I received the permit to be discharged under the condition that exercise is prohibited for a few more days.

"That's a good idea. It seems suffocating if you stay here doing nothing"

"It's not "It seems suffocating", it really is suffocating…….i really want to stop coming back here ever again"

"Fufu. You're a regular already"

…….i feel like it's too late already.

Many students are admitted in due to injuries but, I can't help to think that I am the Kouryou Academy's history first student to be admitted 3 times from the span of the start of my 1st year to summer.

"By the way-----that girl didn't come?"

"If it's Julie; isn't it class time now?"

"She didn't show up that's why I asked"

You got a point there, I nodded.

(But, it really is rare for Julie to skip class……..)

Unlike the whimsical gold girl in front of me, the silver girl is actually quite responsible.

Within my knowledge, she has not skipped class before.

(…….maybe-----)

I have an idea about it but, this is something I have to ask her or I won't get the answer.

However, if she didn't come here then, where is Julie right now?

Is she in the dorm room, or------

(……no, more importantly now----)

I decided to leave Julie aside temporarily and concentrate back at Lilith.

"Hey Lilith. Can we get into the main topic already?"

"Main topic?"

"You have something that you don't others to hear so you picked this time to come-----right?"

"……correct. I sometimes don't know if you're dense or sharp"

While making a wry smile, Lilith shrugged her shoulders.

"Well, we can talk while walking, if you are heading back to the dorm"

I nodded to her suggestion and quickly packed my stuff to head out the room with her.

When we got outside, the strong sunlight burned my skin.

Even though the lantern festival is over, I guess summer is still going to go on.

I walked back to the dorm and beside me is the girl with Yellow Topazblonde hair that won't lose to the glow of the sun.

"……it's about <<K>> huh?"

"I was wondering about what happened after he was apprehended"

Apparently with his consciousness cut from the <<Blaze>>, <<K>> was brought towards the medical ward by the security guards after they appended him.

“He was injured before the fight?”

“Yes. And it was quite serious”

The reason was not clear but, it seems that <<K>> suffered serious injuries before Tsukimi and our fight.

And it was so serious that he might have died if he was brought to the emergency room a little later.

“Most likely, he wished to fight while fully prepared for death”

“Just why would he; in such a body…….”

“That just means that finishing things up with you means a lot to him……If you really are curious about it then, should I tell them to ask?”

Ask him-----That’s probably the main reason why they saved him even though he brought great damage to Kouryou academy AKA Dawn Organization many times.

This is so that they can gain information through interrogation of the enemy organization-Gogmagog.

“…….no, never mind. I somehow know that he will not answer------ it feels like that”

“I see…….i understand”

“What’s going to happen to----<<K>>?”

“There are many instances that those type of devoted ones cannot be handled so, dragging him over through deals won’t be happening”

Even though Lilith's face turned moody from my question, she told me the actions that the Dawn organization's was trying to take.

What's left is probably using him as business materials to deal with Gogmagog but, I think that won't be happening if I think about them coming to receive someone who is gravely injured.

Which means; it won't be hard to imagine what is going to happen later.

The world we are in right now is outside the realms of law.

"It's better to fret about it"

"……..thanks, Lllith. I am okay"

I replied and thanked her for her consideration.

Our words were cut off for a while.

While hearing the cicada coming from a distance, we continued walking without talking and------

(Ah…….)

I quickly stopped when he reached the clock tower nearby.

It's because I saw the black yellow guard fence showing that it is prohibited to enter.

Over the other side of the fence was the scars of the Ether cannon that <<K>> shot at Tsukimi.

Thinking back again; it's quite amazing that we were able to block the Twin Ether Cannon which has more explosive output than normal.

(It's all thanks to Julie……..)

I might have not won if I was alone.

It's because I believed in her at that time that I am……..

“I saw the report. Looks like it was one crazy fight”

“Well yeah…….”

While directing her sapphire eyes at the place prohibited from entering, Lilith said that.

2 days go, an investigation was conducted on us by a staff member dispatched by Dawn organization.

Lilith then read through the report created with additional information including the scars of the battle.

Which means----she should also know about the mysterious <<Power>> inside Julie.

Just how did this gold girl feel when she saw the article in the report?

(Julie huh……..)

I moved towards the tower from the fence and told Lilith.

“Lilith. I have somewhere to go so, sorry but, can you let me go alone”

“Alone? Well I don’t mind……..well then, I will head back to the dorm first”

After seeing off the gold girl walking at the path leading to the dorm, I once again looked back at the clock tower.

“Well then…….”

After mumbling alone, I started walking towards the clock tower.

It’s been 4 months since I walked into the clock tower------ever since the day I officially teamed up with Julie as <<Duo>>.

One step after another, I climbed up the stone stairs of the quiet tower.

The stairs soon ended and I reached a hall before-----

Chirin I heard the sound of bells with the wind.

“Tooru……..”

The silver girl who was looking up at the sky, turned around.

It’s not like I saw her from below but, the first thing that popped up in my mind when I thought about Julie in the medical room was the clock tower.

“It’s not good to skip class you know, Julie”

I went closer to her while saying that before standing beside her to look out the window.

My head was filled with Julie during the last time I came here but, now that I take a good look outside, I am able to take a good look at the academy which I have many fates with, and the buildings expanding across the tall walls.

“Nice view”

“Ja--……”

Even though Julie nodded, she looked downwards.

“…….are you okay coming outside?”

“Yeah. Although it’s with a condition that I can’t exercise, I will be heading back to the dorm starting from today”

“That’s good”

After saying that, a gentle wind came in when Julie made a soft smile.

The wind passing by feels comfortable.

“Okay then. I feel like relaxing here but, let’s head back already”

After I tapped Julie's shoulder, I turned my heel and walked off.

I stopped walking because of one sentence the silver girl said.

"<<Wind Jerzu>>-----"

"Eh…….?"

When I turned around, her Ruby eyesred eyes looked at me.

"That is the <<Power>> of my <<Blaze>> you saw"

"The ability to kick the sky, was the real <<Power>> of your <<Blaze>>…..?"

Chirin the bells echoed when the silver girl nodded.

It took a while to digest Julie's words before I made up my mind.

"I was hesitating if I should ask. It's just that I thought you might know about your own <<Power>>……."

When I first woke up at the medical room and asked her about the <<Power>>, Julie looked like she wanted to say something.

But after I saw the anxiety in the eyes of the silver girl, I ended the conversation by pretending that she does not know about her own <<Power>>.

That's because I was trapped by a strong uneasiness.

I thought that Julie might go somewhere-------

I was stuck with that thought.

But now; the silver girl told me about her <<Power>> for whatever reason it may be.

The same anxiety as that time was floating in her eyes.

But, she did not hide the truth and told me.

That's why I have the obligation to listen to the rest of her story.

I have to listen to the confession made by the girl that I made a vow to be a <<Duo>> with.

"Will you tell me? The truth about Julie----I have to know"

"Ja---"

The bells echoed when the wind blew her Silver BlondeSilver hair-----

She then started talking about herself.

"I----am not an <<Exceed>>"

"Wha..!?"

Shock came out from my mouth when I heard the truth Julie presented.

That's normal.

That's because Julie has the physical abilities far surpassing human beings while is able to manifest the <<Blaze>> too like us-----and that weapon is the biggest characteristic of being an <<Exceed>>.

It's hard to believe but, I know the best that this silver girl is not one that will joke.

"Then, what are you?"

"<<Ell Awake>>-----a human that has awakened their hidden <<Power>>……that's me"

Julie placed her hand on her chest and called herself that.

"Everything started on that snowy night------yes, when this curse was carved on my back"

While saying that, Julie moved her hands to her shoulders as if she was reaching for the scar.

"I-----couldn't understand immediately when my papa died. The hand patting my head gently fell off powerlessly, his smile disappeared, and his eyes stopped opening-----I was just there blank there and I could only stare at my papa turning colder……."

Ironically, it was the man that killed him that made Julie understood that her father died.

Your father is dead------you're the one that killed him, those were his words.

Violent anger and hatred were brewing inside the girl when she was pulled back to reality.

A concentrate of pure black negative emotions that could be called <<Black beast>>, took over Julie's heart and made her jump defenselessly towards her enemy.

However, there's no way such a young girl could beat someone that even Gimle's number hero-Julie's father could handle.

She got punched to the ground but even so, Julie stilled glared at her enemy with violent emotions.

"I prayed for <<Power>> and wished for it. I wanted a <<Fang>> that is able stab into him and tear his throat into pieces……."

At that time, Julie felt a scorching pain on her chest.

It felt like the <<Black Beast>> turned into hell fire and was trying to burn down her heart.

Immediately, an extreme pain attacked her as if her blood, flesh and bones were scorched down.

Julie's body was really covered in <<Flame>>.

(It's the same as the when the <<Lucifer>> is administrated……)

And------Julie grabbed the <<Flame>> just like how I did it so.

“The <<Flame>> I grabbed turned into the <<Double>> and I gained the <<Power>>-----of 2 <<Fangs>>”

Julie bore her fangs at her enemy again with the <<Power>> she gained.

Her old self is no longer there.

She turned stronger and faster as if she was another person and she was able to fly too.

But even so------it still did not reach her enemy’s life.

Julie was then scarred at her back after she lost and that was the start of her path as an <<Avenger>>.

“……..i know that unlike me, you broke through your limits as a human-----and turned into that <<Ell Awake>> or something. But why come to Kouryou academy? If you gained <<Power>> during that point of life then, what is your reason for getting closer to this academy?”

Julie made a small nod at my question before talking again.

“After 2 years my papa was killed by that man-----It’s an event that happened 4 years ago from now”

In a way that her mother wouldn’t find out----Julie entered the forest to train her <<Blaze>> and met up with several foreigners.

She found this out later but, it seems that they were all mafia remnants that have soiled their hands in criminal activities overseas.

They were at that time escaping and were shocked to see the silver girl at such an impossible area---deep inside the forest.

That’s only normal.

No one would imagine finding a girl swinging swords deep inside a forest covered in snow.

The men who regained their composure, planned to use Julie to slow down the <<Exceed>> chasing them as much as possible.

If the pursuer found a seriously injured Julie then, they will be able to buy some time because the pursuer would either threat Julie or call someone to help; and even though they pointed the gun at her-----

Their evil intentions, caused the <<Black Beast>> to awaken----

After The Mafia remnants were disabled in a short time, a female <<Exceed>> called Valeria who were chasing them, showed up at the area.

Julie went berserk------(but it seems that the memories were still with her)-----and judged that the female that suddenly appeared to be a new enemy before attacking her.

“During the battle, it seems that Valeria was shocked. It’s because she realized that the identity of the opponent that attacked her was a child”

Still being controlled by the <<Black Beast>>, Julie battled equally with Valeria who is a <<High level>> <<Exceed>>.

The battle concluded quickly.

As a result of going all out with her <<Power>> without any restraints in berserk state-----Julie suddenly lost her speed and the battle ended when she was beaten down because of that reason.

After that, Valeria took custody of Julie and brought her under Dawn Organization’s care, with the reason that Julie is suffering a disease that was corroding her body and it was undetected even by herself-----(This reason was for her mother).

The person she met there was the birth parent of the <<Lucifer>> and the Chairman’s grandfather- Professor Tsukumo.

“At that time, I found out that I am an <<Ell Awake>>”

“What is the <<Ell Awake>>…….?”

Julie answered my question through the information told by Professor Tsukumo.

That every human has a <<Power>> hidden in their <<Soul>> called <<Luminous>>.

That every human is able to control a body which has gone over the limits, by awakening the <<Luminous>>.

The awakened person can manifest their <<Soul>> into a weapon, and can even activate a special skill.

"It's just like the <<Exceed>>>……..no, the <<Exceed>> is just like----"

"Ja. That is correct Tooru. The <<Exceed>> are <<Ell Awake>> who awoken the <<Luminous>> artificially through the <<Lucifer>>-----That's what I have been told"

"I see……"

I could only be shocked at the truth presented to me which isn't even taught in class.

"After that, I was able given the ability to control the <<Power>> which I couldn't before"

From what I heard, it seems that Julie's body was at a wreck because it was unable to endure the <<Power>> at that time.

To fix that, Professor Tsukumo arranged sword training for her and also not only that, but also to raise her neglected basic physical abilities until she can enroll to Kouryou academy.

And in a few months, she was able to unleash her controlled <<Power>> by taking each step but------

When she saw my critical state in the fight with <<K>>, her violent emotions awoken the <<Black Beast>> and removed her limiter temporarily.

“I----made a lie”

While looking down, Julie placed her hand on her chest and grabbed her uniform.

“I lied to hide this <<Power>> from you, and pretended that I am an <<Exceed>>……”

Lies and pretend----

That’s correct.

Julie said that she don’t really remember about the fight on the boat with her unleased <<Power>>.

More importantly, she has been keeping the truth about her being an <<Ell Awake>> from her <<Duo>> -me.

Everything----was reality.

“I was afraid. That you would leave me if you knew the truth……”

This was probably the anxiety Julie showed in the medical room.

She was afraid that I might make a wall if I found out about the different existence called <<Ell Awake>>; on top of that, she cannot help but to feel anxious that I might even leave her because of that.

“But, there is something I am more afraid of. If I am swallowed by the <<Black Beast>> next time-----I might even hurt Tooru when it happens, I might even take your life; I am really afraid of that……..”

Julie looked at me with her anxious filled eyes and continued her words.

“But even so……”

She had the expression of running away.

However, Julie made up her mind not to run.

So that she could tell me the truth, her wishes, and desire.

"But even so, I still want to be with you"

The silver girl confessed her wish and desire to me.

"I lied, pretended and might even hurt you someday. But-----"

Even though she was afraid of rejection, Julie brought her hands forward to me.

Just like how I extend my hands to her in this clock tower before.

"Can I continue being your <<Duo>>, Tooru"

Julie, stared at me and waited.

She was waiting for my words.

She was waiting for my choice.

That's why I will tell her my will.

"Those who have bonded, must use their utmost ability to stay together---whether it's through happiness or sadness or being healthy; until the day death separates us……..!"

I placed my hand on Julie's hand.

"……Really?"

"Of course"

"……..As long as I am your <<Duo>>, I might end up hurting you and the others"

"I have my <<Shield>> to prevent you from hurting others"

"……I am weak. I will rely on you a lot you know?"

"I relied on you when I was having it tough right? That's what you call supporting each other as <<Duo>>"

“Ah…….”

It seems that Julie recalled back the words she said on a certain night.

“Is that so……..”

Julie nodded with a small smile.

Chirin after hearing a ring, I told the silver girl this.

“Julie, let me protect you with this <<Shield>>”

“Tooru……..!”

I then, said the wish and desire we both wanted.

“We are <<Duo>>. From now on, and forever……..!!”

“Ja--. Together forever……!”

Gyuu after her small hands gripped my hand tightly, Julie smiled.

Her smile looked so happy yet she was close to crying.

My heart shook greatly when I saw that smile---

And I ended up hugging the silver girl by reflex.

“……That was a little surprising”

“Haha, Sorry. I somehow feel like I needed to do that”

“I see”

After the silver girl commented on the hug, my cheeks turned a little red and I replied back with a wry smile.

Just like Julie, she had some kind of happy atmosphere around her but---
--

Her expression was slightly clouded.

“Tooru……is it really okay?”

“You still worry about that?”

“I’ve been feeling guilty the whole time so…….”

After seeing her slightly dropped her shoulders, I swung my head with the intentions of telling her not to worry.

“…….it’s true that you might have lied. You might have pretended too. That’s reality but--------so what? Even I have 1 or 2 things I didn’t tell you”

“……..and what is that?”

“A secret. But, I think the time to tell you will come soon”

I will, someday.

What should I do with Julie’s revenge?

Should I stop Julie’s wish------for revenge?

But as an <<Avenger>> too, do I even have the authority to stop Julie of her revenge?

I can’t answer that now.

But, I have to come up with the answer until that day comes.

“…….I understand. Then, someday”

“Yeah, I will, someday”

I nodded and told Julie that we should head back to the dorm.

After Julie nodded, she once again joined our hands.

“Ju-Julie…….?”

"-----?"

Julie tilted her small head when she looked at me shaken caused by this and the hug just now.

"N-no, nothing……"

Compared to sleeping together, joining hands isn't a big deal.

Oddly enough, my heartbeat was pumping faster than usual.

"Eeer, mo-more importantly, this is about the talk just now. The sentence regarding the <<Duo>> feels embarrassing to put into words huh. Like, it's like a wedding vow……..!"

(Wait, What the heck did I say!?)

I retorted at my running mouth inside my mind.

On the other hand, Julie----

"……Now that you say that, I feel that too now"

After saying that, the silver girl looking down blushed and revealed her embarrassment.

Normally, the silver girl was the one who makes me feel panic and awkward.

When I saw Julie looking up at me looking shy, I felt so embarrassed that smoke might puff out from my head until I die.

"O-okay then, let's head back to the dorm and eat. Also, we have to attend afternoon training too. Hahaha……"

“J-ja--, that’s true, let’s do that…….but, before that-----“

“Hn?”

“Can we go back to the room first?”

“! Yeah, that’s right”

I tried guessing what the silver girl meant------

Our voices mixed together and said the next word.

“”Let’s drink Apple tea again””

Part 2

Including the students; everyone related to the academy knows about the <<Lucifer>> research facility under Kouryou academy.

However, there are several facilities underground other than the <<Lucifer>> research lab that the student’s don’t know. Within one of them, a teenager called <<K>> was imprisoned in a jail facility in the security office ------basically it’s a prison.

(I look pathetic huh)

After regaining his consciousness, <<K>> found out that he lost; he then evaluated his captured self and saw that he could not move because of the straitjacket and could not talk because of the mouth restraint.

But, forget even anger, the craziness he showed in the fight with Tooru has disappeared from his eyes.

Unlike the craziness that happened in the fight, his mind feels calm too.

It’s felt like a dream.

It’s as if the evil spirit was cut down together with his <<Soul>> by the <<Blaze>>.

<<K>> knows where the reason of this change came from.

(It turned out like that in the end but, I know…….)

At that time--------he saw Tooru's back blocking the blade swung down by the silver girl and it made his violent emotions grow even more violent.

However now; an indescribable sense of defeat was given to <<K>> each time he closes his eyelids and see that scene. That's because the action Tooru took, was the only cause that answered the scream which has been screaming deep inside <<K>>'s chest the whole time ------the voice that has been calling out for help.

People change.

No matter who it is, there are various triggers to accomplish that.

That's something true no matter how contradictory others think off it.

Even though <<K>> hasn't notice that, he has gained the trigger.

But----it's too late.

<<K>> will die in the near future.

It's because it's the end after information's about Gogmagog are extracted from him.

Even fully aware of his end, he had no intentions to resist.

He had no obligation to keep quiet for the sake of the organization that discarded him, and more importantly, he no longer has the obsession he had with Tooru and the will to live anymore.

This happened at that time.

"For he is named Shakespeare. Everything belongs on the stage while every person is the performer----" Suddenly, a clear voice echoed in the prison.

(Wha……..!?)

Immediately a bright light appeared.

<<K>> felt shaken in his mind towards the event that happened with no notice.

(This is---- Gate Teleporting Magic!?)

The mysterious light he is witnessing now is the same as the move used by the <<Tempest Judge>> in the <<Rein Conference>>.

(But, what kind of goal…….!?)

During <<K>>'s bewilderment, the light shun through his shape and filled the area until it leaked outside-----and popped.

Immediately right after; <<K>> forgotten how to breath for a while when he felt the presence that suddenly appeared behind him.

The clear voice sound so smooth like water, and the person was giving off the presence of the bottomless abyss.

(Ju-just who is this person……!?)

The unidentified existence, walked passed <<K>> from behind while continuing his sentence.

"Every performer has their own role------but when that role is over; what happens to the performer I wonder"

The clear voice that echoed just in in the person belongs to a young man-----and what's more a teenager at his mid-10's.

The teen walked forward from <<K>> and stopped without looking back.

His appearance looks like----darkness.

<<K>> felt that the teen's existence was like a human shaped by the darkness from the abyss.

That's because the loitering boy had hair, clothes, sword, sword handle, and even the sheath all in black color.

The teen slowly turned around and talked towards <<K>> who was looking at him suspiciously.

"You should know me <<K>>-----no, Kevin Wiffia"

(H-how do you know that name……..!?)

<<K>> felt shocked when his lost name was spoken out.

But-----

Next off, <<K>> felt an impact that surpasses his shock.

That happened when he saw the eyes of the dark and calm teen.

The moment <<K>> opened his eyes wide because he reached to the conclusion on, who the teen in front of him is------

The teen suddenly pulled out his sword.

The sword drew an arch from above and sliced <<K>>'s mouth restraint right in the middle.

"You can't talk if you remained like that"

With his restraints taken off, <<K>> fell to his knees onto the hard ground and looked up at the teen.

"Don't tell me……you're……."

The dark teen smiled answered the question <<K>> asked for confirmation.

"…….why, are you here…….?"

The teen opened his mouth this time without answering the 2nd question.

“Thank you <<K>>. Thanks to you, they awoken and the 1st stage has ended. As thanks; I have come to reward you with the truth”

“Fu, haha……..so everything was according to the script”

After the dark teen told him that, <<K>> let out a dry laugh when he found out that he was dancing on the palm of the dark teen’s hand.

“Yes. It’s according to script. Ever since your brother died to this day----everything……..that’s fact”

“Wh……what did you say……..no, impossible……..everything since that day……..? The-then…….my brother’s-----!!”

<<K>>’s voice shook at the content of the sentence that made him recall back his brother’s death that occurred when he covered for him 7 years ago.

“You probably suffered for a long time, <<K>>. Really, good work……but, your rolehas ended. There might be a chance that the script might get distorted if you tell Dawn organization about the information you have so-------I will have you leave now”

“…..Shut up……shut up……!! You bastard, you’re the one who killed my brother……!! UaaaaaAA-----!!”

The sadness of his brother murdered and the anger of his whole life being played turned into hatred and controlled <<K>>’s body to jump at the teen in front of him to crush his throat, but-----

Suddenly, something weird occurred in his body.

A middle border appeared and his view tilted.

No, that has already passed and <<K>> does not even realize this.

When the teen cut the straightjacket and mouth restrain, his life has been severed too at the same time.

“A-aaah-ah……”

After receiving a sword strike permitted only by a master; <<K>>'s body was split into half like the straightjacket just now.

Half of the body dropped with a thud and the remaining half turned to a lump of flesh while the knees were still bent on the ground.

The teen gently smiled and told this to the lump of flesh which used to be call <<K>>.

"Rest in peace, Kevin Wiffia. ***If I use his words then***------Have a Bonne Vacancenice vacation, for Eterniaeternity"

A light appeared in the room again and started covering the dark teen.

Right before disappearing into the light, the teen mumbled to himself.

"Well then----Let's the second chapter begin"

Chapter 4 『Something Changed』

Part 1

"<<Level Limit>>>…….?"

On the night I remade my vow of the <<Duo>> with the silver girl-----

Right when I was asking about things I felt odd in the story I heard in the afternoon; I ended up asking back the word that I never heard before.

This question was regarding about how Julie controlled her <<Power>> and what is it.

"Even though I awoke the <<Luminous>> 4 years ago, my body and mind could not keep up with the <<Power>>"

An <<Exceed>> require the mental and physicality to match the <<Level>> but, in another way to put it; it's basically a safety system placed for the <<Power>> of the stature.

But, there exists no <<Level>> for the <<Ell Awake>> and naturally, there's no safety system working. By any chance the mind and body is weak; the person will be swung around by the <<Power>> over their limits and there are times that the person might end up crippled; that's what she heard from professor Tsukumo it seems.

"If I kept that up, my body or mind or both might end up breaking soon. But, Professor Tsukumo had a way to control the <<Power>>"

<<Level Limit>>----

It seems that the nano-machines originally worked as a way to control the <<Lucifer>> and it's created so that the body can be trained by already existing machines. Judging by the fact that the physicality increase exponentially along with the <<Level>>; it's true that it's much more practical that way than to prepare specialized units.

"And that worked on Julie huh"

"Ja---"

Even Professor Tsukumo would not have imagined that the development of the <<Lucifer>> would save an RealEll awake even though it's a system created for the FakeExceeds.

But, it's not like its perfect.

It has been unlocked depending on her surroundings up until now but, Julie has forcefully released the limiter in the battle and in the seaside school with sheer willpower.

That's normally impossible but, Julie says that the <<Level limiter>> does not completely work on her-An <<Ell Awake>>.

Maintaining the condition that she unleashed it once before, she explains that she has unlocked the <<Level Limiter>> to the point of <<Level 4>> by unleashing it again in the last fight.

(……<<Level Limiter>>. If that exists then, it will explain ***that*** but-----no, that's not something I should be concerned about. More importantly----)

I focused back on Julie and asked.

"Is your body okay, when you unlock the <<Level Limiter>>?"

"Ja--. My mind and body has grown in the past 3 years"

"I see. That's great"

While nodding, I snuck a peek because of a thought that took my interest.

(……grown?)

I looked towards the silver girl's modest bulge.

"----Tooru?"

Luckily, Julie did not understand my gaze and tilted her small head so, I quickly changed the question.

How many people know that Julie is an <<Ell Awake>>, how are we going to explain to the others regarding her <<Level Limiter>> released state.

"Only a few numbers of people know including the chairman. For others, it seems that they were told that I had gone through a special sublimation for an emergency"

When we were talking like this; the night gotten deeper and-----

Peek…….*Peek*……..

It was getting closer to light off and Julie started to look kind of restless.

When I started wondering what she was peeking it, she was looking at the clock and-----

I made a speculation based on how she's waiting for something anxiously.

"…….Julie, I have something to ask……."

"What is it, Tooru?"

"You're thinking of sleeping together tonight?"

"------! Amazing. It's amazing you knew"

Judging by the fact that I have been in the hospital for these past few days and the event that happened today; I was able to predict this.

"……..is it okay?"

She looked at me with full expectations and I had to answer her while patting her head with a wry smile.

"Aah, of course"

"Ja—♪"

Julie looked happy.

It was okay until to this point.

"By the way Tooru. Let's sleep together twice a week from now on"

A crazy remark came together with her happiness.

"Wha!? What's with that all of a sudden…"

Even though the condition was "If Julie was very lonely" until now, we would sleep together once a week but; I lost my composure when she suddenly told me to increase the time.

“You said that you will support me if I feel lonely. And, to share the happiness together”

(I think it’s more embarrassing than happy for me!?)

“……..No?”

She started at me and made me feel troubled------

“……I guess it’s okay”

“Ja---♪“

I ended up nodding due to failing in refusing.

In a semi-forced way, it has been decided that we will be sleeping together twice a week but, I felt one kind of anxiety (?).

That’s------

(it won’t increase from now on right?)

That’s the case it seems…….

“Then, let’s go to bed”

“Y-yeah, okay…….”

After I nodded powerlessly--------

Tokotokotoko…..*Poof*

Julie climbed up to my bed and sat down without any hesitation.

“Here you go”

She spread her hands and took a “Come, fly into my arms” pose.

“…….what do you mean by here you go”

“No matter how lonely I feel, it’s unfair to keep relying on you”

“No, we don’t have to do it now……..”

“Here you go”

It was at this moment that I felt like I got stuck in a sticky situation.

The day passed by as we go through two layers of tough trials called heat plus training.

The information of the destruction of the <<Libels>> was told by the academy and it calmed the academy down a bit; our lifestyle returned back at the same time with that but--------

Us; the first year were still depressed.

The reason was known.

Tsukimi wasn’t back.

(She’s quite the mood maker though she’s like that……)

The person who looks the most depressed was Kibitsu who was at the spot.

She’s been depressed recently and although Miyabi and Tachibana were cheering her up, it’s probably going to be hard to regain her liveliness before Tsukimi get back.

(Looks impossible for a while……)

Although I heard her life was spared, it doesn’t change the fact that it’s serious injuries.

Even now she’s probably still in the emergency ward; and the moment I was daydreaming beside the window------

An impact came.

It wasn’t a mental impact but a physical impact at my back.

“Uwaaah!?”

And since it was quite strong, I was pathetically flipped over before I ended up making a 大 shape.

(Wha, Whaaaat!?)

The answer was outside the window.

The familiar looking rabbit ear head bands + maid clothing definitely belongs to-----

“Tsukimi!?”

“Hello hello♪ Those who felt lonely because sensei was no here, raise your hands☆”

[Oh, White Usa-sensei!] [Long time no see, White Usa-sensei♪] [Y-your panties……]

While sitting on the window frame with one knee rose, taking on a pose that gives full exposure of her panties; Tsukimi send her voice inside with the usual cheerful tone.

“And so, I’m back♪ This is the complete return of Usa-sensei, V☆”

“What “V”!!”

I stood up while shouting in anger before pointing at Tsukimi and shouted again.

“Don’t kick someone’s back right when you got back!! And, I can see your panties so conceal it!!”

“Iyaaaaan, Kokonoe-kun you pervert☆ It’s not that my panties can be seen, I. am. Showing. it♥

”Why…….”

“I’ve been away for a while, so this is masturbating material gift for you…….”

Don’t look so serious when you say that.

“You’re the same as usual…….you say complete return but, that eyepatch----“

I pointed out the part that looked like a battle scar.

“Ah, This? It looks cool right. As a memorable gift for leaving the hospital, this is the Usa-maid cosplay chuunibyou version”

……..i was stupid enough to worry.

“Well more importantly”

“What is it?”

After making a big sigh, I looked at a girl.

“If you’re doing so well then isn’t it okay if you contacted Kibitsu at least?”

“Mu?”

“Ah……..”

Kibitsu looking at Tsukimi opened her eyes wide------

“S-sensei……..i am, so glad…….uu, *hicc*…….Fueeeeeeee…….”

She started crying.

“Ahh……..”

On the other hand, Tsukimi looked awkward and walked closer to Kibitsu.

“Sorry to make you worry, Momo. But well, I am doing just fine as you can see so, relax. Okay?”

Even though Tsukimi brought Kibitsu's head to her chest to make her relax, Kibitsu then raised her voice and cried.

"Fueeeeee……"

"Stop crying, okay? Please stop crying…….ahh, damn it, Oi <<Irregular>>! Do something about thisssssssssss!!"

It seems that Tsukimi is bad with this kind of stuff and is actually showing off a rare panicked appearance.

Although I do feel bad for the crying Kibitsu, most of us in class (Including me) were laughing out loud while looking at Tsukimi.

At this moment, the 1st year classroom has regained their liveliness.

Lunch passed and about the time we were finishing our meal-----

"Okay, we are going out, <<Irregular>>!"

"Huh?"

In response to Tsukimi who appeared out of nowhere and said something weird, I replied back with a jaw drop.

"Huh? The heck is with that. When are we going out to celebrate my recovery?"

Classes ended by noon and I know that there is an empty space after noon but-----

"Why must i……"

Though I mumbled that, I saw 2 girls standing behind Tsukimi---- Miyabi and Kibitsu.

Maybe caring for Kibitsu, Miyabi had lunch together with Tsukimi today and was looking at me with a wry smile.

“Ahaha……the conversation kind of ended up to going to Death New LandDNL……”

“Death New LandDNL!?”

The person that got lured by the destination was the Yellow blonde girl.

She has been going there once or twice per month ever since she transferred here so it’s easy to know that she will react.

“Kuhahah. You get it quick, Ojou-sama”

“Tooru is going, and it’s Death New LandDNL; there’s no way I won’t be joining”

(Why am I already included……)

1 hour later----

In the end, I had no choice to join and was standing right at the entrance of Death New LandDNL.

“There are a lot of people as expected”

While saying that, Lilith looked around.

With the gold girl leading the way, Tsukimi+Kibitsu, Miyabi+Tachibana, and Julie+me; the male to female ratio of familiar faces has reoccurred again like the event at the beach.

Of course, we invited Tora and Tatsu too but, they rejected this time too.

Tora-[Why must I celebrate that woman’s recovery].

Tatsu no longer mind that he was almost killed by Tsukimi but, he said Tora would get noisy if he joined.

From that situation, I ended up being the only guy that jointed.

(However, this line up really stands out huh……..)

Somehow, they stand out.

What's more, they really really stand out.

Of course for the fact that we are being the center of attention, I could hear never ending guesses that there is a photo shoot for an idol group-------(Probably because everyone was wearing the same uniform).

"A-aren't we kind of being looked at"

Tachibana said out the same comment I was holding inside me, including Miyabi standing in front.

"Fufuu, that's because Lilithshe stands out"

(I think you stand out too, Tachibana)

Compared to Lilith and Julie, she does take a step back from flashiness but, her flowing black hair, dignified atmosphere and arranged face, enter the realms of favorable beauty.

(Miyabi too…….)

I think she's cute and would stand out.

…….i'll keep what stands out inside my heart.

And another person that does not lose to Lilith in getting attention was the Silver BlondeSilver hair beauty standing beside me.

(-----wait, huh?)

When I took a glance at Julie, I found out her cheeks were blushing.

It somehow feels like she has a fever.

"Julie, are you feeling sick?"

She wasn't like this during lunch time so I asked her in concern-----

"……..Nai"

After a slight pause, Julie swung her head sideways.

"Really? You look kind of blank you know……"

"……..i think it's because I was feeling a little pumped up"

"Perhaps, you're looking forward to this?"

After a nod, I could see a glow inside Julie's eyes now that she stated that out.

"Then, let's have all the fun we can get today"

"Ja---♪ "

"Okay, let's not waste time and keep on going. After sticking with the basics, we will go to the attractions everyone suggested by sequence. Once we finish a lap, we can discuss where to go on at that time"

When we entered the park, Lilith suggested a plan on the attractions that we are about to go to.

Since its a good plan, no one rejected the idea and the plan was commenced.

The basics that we are about to go are the 3 jet coasters and everyone told their own request to Lilith after the basics.

"Errrr, first we head to the lightning strike, next the Crazy Tea Party, next off is the looping----Uuun, we need something moderate and relaxing before……."

While mumbling the name of the attractions and its details, Lilith was not only thinking about the nearest course but also one that is friendly to us.

After seeing her like that, Tachibana opened her eyes wide.

"……You're amazing Lilith. I think this is impossible but, did you remember everything?"

"I guess I do remember?"

Last time, we went around the attractions without any hesitation too.

(It was tough at that time……)

Going around was tough too but, thanks to Lilith linking our arms the whole time, something soft kept touching my elbow and that was the worst torture time for a teenage boy.

When I was recalling back the last time I came to the park----

"What's wrong, Kokonoe? Let's go already"

"Eh!? I-it's Tachibana's arm this time……..!?"

After Tachibana talked to me--------I panicked while looking at her chest in reflex.

"Arm wrestling? What are you saying at a place like this? Everyone already started walking so; we'll get separated if you daydream"

"Ah…….i-I see. Sorry, hahaha……"

Luckily, Tachibana misunderstood my words and looked at me, who made a weird comment.

After laughing to play it off, I stepped forward to chase after everyone who walked off.

A situation occurred when we were waiting for the first Jet coaster.

"Er-err, Tooru-kun. Can I sit beside you for the ride?"

“Eh…….err……..”

I hesitated to answer Miyabi’s request.

It’s easy to reply yes.

But, since I know of her feelings, I was wondering if I should answer her expectations or not.

Miyabi then, looked through my mind.

“Tooru-kun. You don’t have to care about whether or not to answer my expectations. But if you have even the slightest feeling on wanting to ride with me, it would make me happy”

“……..I-I get it. Then let’s get on together……”

My back got pushed------more specifically, I ended up being pushed by Miyabi who took a step forward and I agreed.

“Ah……ehehe, thank you Tooru-kun”

But------

“Wait just a second there, Miyabi”

The gold girl interfered there.

“It’s obvious that I’m the one sitting beside Tooru. Of course, this includes the whole day”

“N-no wayyy……..i want to ride with Tooru-kun too…….”

“Sorry. But sadly that’s the case”

“Nai, I think Miyabi is okay. I don’t mind if it’s me or Tomoe too”

“You keep quiet”

The 1st “DNL competition for me” event begins.

Of course, their suggestions would not come to equal grounds, which ended up increasing the uproar.

If that's the case then, this conversation would naturally end up being heard by the people around us.

"Kuhahah, right now, all the males nearby are feeling pissed, <<Irregular>>"

"I want to go with Sensei"

"Ou, no problem there. Then, let's ride it together"

"Waaai"

Even when Tsukimi's teasing came from behind, the war did not end.

Forget that, my arm was being pulled from different directions and Julie was hugging me from the front for some reason.

The surround male customers were piercing me with [Get torn apart] glares--------but, I was in the situation where my mind could only half-consciously know that.

(So-soft objects are taking turns to touch both of elbows here!?)

Yuyuun when I get pulled to one side.

Boyoyon when I get pulled to the other side.

Both of sides were soft and springy and the pulling was getting stronger as time passed------

"*Cough*. Stop right there. I understand each requests but, you lot are causing trouble to the surroundings by being noisy"

Tachibana stopped the girl's fight.

"I have a suggestion here. Let's decide who he sits with using Rock paper scissors okay?"

"Oh, that's a good one"

"NICE" when I was praising Tachibana's heavenly voice------

"Bu-but that means that there might be a chance that we might not get a turn to ride it with Tooru-kun right……?"

"Mu……that's true"

Tachibana's expression turned cloudy at Miyabi's designation.

"……If it's like that, we have requests we told Lilith right? At that time, the person that made the request gets to choose who to ride it with?"

"Fumu, that's a fair and good idea but----anyone rejecting this?"

No rejects came up as expected and the game began immediately to choose the grouping.

"Scissors, paper, stone"

After Tachibana's talk------it has been decided that I ride it alone.

"Waiii……"

I got a little teary since I had to ride the jet coaster alone at the front.

……..also, all the male customers were looking at me with very satisfied smiles.

The next attraction is Tea cup Julie requested.

Since the maximum capacity is 4 people, we separated to 2 groups and this time, I won't feel sad anymore because I get to ride the cup with Julie and Miyabi.

"Ehehe, we are together this time, Tooru-kun"

“Yeah, I am so happy to be together”

“Eh? Ah, R-really?.....Fufuu ♪ “

(Being alone like just now was tough……..)

When I recalled back the event, the staff closed the cup entrance.

[YoShaaaaaa, Let’s spin!] [It has not started yet!]

I could hear the other group’s voice from the other cup they rode and it suddenly made me think of something.

“Hey, Miyabi. This is about controlling the Tea cup but, we have that problem of who requested this attraction so, I think we should leave it to Julie……..”

“Ah, Un. That’s okay”

“Then this is decided. Julie, you’ll be controlling”

“-----Controlling?”

The silver girl replied back with a small tilt with the head at my suggestion.

It looks like she’s seriously saying that.

“Perhaps, you never rode a Tea cup before?”

“Ja—“

It seems that she picked this ride because she got interested by the word [Spinning spinning tea cup].

“Once the song starts, the cup we are riding on will spin if you spin the handle in the middle. If you spin it to the opposite side, the cap will only spin to the other side”

“……..Looks interesting”

After explaining how to control, the silver girl nodded.

Together with the melody, the whole ground started moving and we are now able to control the cup.

“You can spin it, Julie”

“Ja---“

Spin……Spin Spin…….the cup started to spin.

Julie then spun the handle to control.

“♪”

It’s hard to know by her expression but, I could tell that she’s having fun by the atmosphere.

…….and, at that moment.

[Spin Spin-----! The scarlet cyclone of Fugaku means me!] [Sensei, my eyes are spinning] [Tsu-tsukimi-sensei, aren’t you spinning a little too hard!? And, what the heck is Fugaku!?] [A game center on a bridge made of boats! Kuaaahahahaaaaaaaaaa!! Spin Spin, this is the big revolution of a flower petal-----!!]

Spin spin spin spin spin spin spin spin spin spin spin----------!!

“You are spinning too much; you’re spinning too much hey!! Listen to what other have to says, you stupid rabbit------!!”

Loud screams could be heard from the cup which was spinning at a speed that can form a butter mix.

“I feel sorry for Lilith and the others but, i am thankful for this grouping……..”

“Ahaha……th-that’s true……”

It was only a brief time I could pat my chest.

“To-Tooru-kun!!”

Suddenly, I heard Miyabi’s voice which sounded like she saw something scary.

I looked towards her thinking what happened----and understood.

Julie’s eyes glowed.

Her gaze was following the cup being ridden clearly by the other group.

“J-Julie…….!”

“Ja---!”

The silver girl made a big nod when I talked to her in panic.

“We will go in full power too”

Spin spin spin spin spin spin spin spin spin spin spin----------!!

“Opposite------!!”

“……it was the opposite huh”

“Yeah, opposite!”

“Ja—♪ “

Julie turned the handle to the opposite direction.

[Gyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa----------!!] [Hyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa----!!]

After 1 and a half minute.

The long yet short nightmare ended when the tea cup stopped.

“To-Tooru-kun……the world is spinning……..”

Due to our semicircular canals damaged, me and Miyabi could not even stand up and was just dead tired inside the cup.

But as for Julie------"

"♪"

She's in a good mood……

(A-as expected from someone who spins regularly…….)

While looking at her small back walking away without any problems, I recalled how she fights.

The scene of how the silver girl dancing around with eye blinding speed; apparently, she has extraordinary sense of balance.

"Okay……let's get off too, Miyabi……."

"U-un……okay….."

While wobbling around, I stood up because I was in front of Miyabi so-----

"Uwah!!"

The moment I got off the cup, my knee's collapsed.

"To-Tooru-kun, look out…….!"

The moment my view got slanted, Miyabi grabbed my hand.

---But, Miyabi's knee also collapsed too.

"Hyaaaa!?"

Miyabi who did not let go of my hand and ended up losing her balance.

The moment I pulled her hands and carried her into my chest-----

We ended up falling down together.

Gon……..! a dull sound appeared and pain started flowing at the back of my head.

“Ouch……”

The impact made my head got woozy and I let out my voice in reflex.

“A-are you okay, Tooru-kun!?”

Miyabi’s worried voice came to me.

“Y-yeah…….more importantly how about you Miyabi? Are you okay?”

“U-un. I am okay thanks to you------“

Miyabi’s sentence suddenly stopped.

“Miyabi?”

After I opened my eyes while calling her name since I was wondering what’s wrong, I found Miyabi’s face at a distance where our nose might touch.

“”……””

“”--------!!””

Pyon

“S-s-sorry, for dragging you in too…….!”

“U-uun. All I did was not let go of your hand…….”

“”……””

“Errr……l-let’s go”

“O-okay…….”

After urging Miyabi to get up, our wobbly legs settled down.

But, it seems that my rampaging heartbeat won't be settling down any time soon.

After we head outside, Lilith's group looked like a pile of corpses.

[Kuha, haha……spinning, spiiining……] [Uu……I feel sick……..] [Sensei…….i can no longer……..] [Tomoe, here] [So-sorry, Julie…….]

After we got off the attraction stage, we found the other 4 person group in groggy stage.

In this disastrous scene, Julie handed over juice to Tomoe that she bought nearby.

"I knew this would happen……."

"I-I think it's a good idea to take a short break……."

No one rejected Miyabi who said it with a wry smile.

……..i think the more correct term is "Can't say anything".

"Tooru"

Julie noticed us at this point and talked to us.

"You were quite slow"

"Haha, I fell down……."

I made a wry smile and nodded when she asked if I was okay.

"It's okay if that's it……by the way, the attraction here was very interesting……!"

With her excitement not cooled down yet, Julie held both her hands at her chest and I could feel her enjoyment from that attitude.

“Y-yeah…….but, it’s a little surprising that you don’t know what a tea cup is. Aren’t there any amusement parks in Gimle.

“Ja—“

*nod**nod* Julie nodded before opening her mouth.

“In Gimle’s amusement park, there are only attractions consist of logs and ropes in the forest so, the whole thing here feels really new to me”

(Julie, that’s field athletics……..)

I retorted in my mind.

“Okay then. Let’s rest around here until everyone can move”

“……”

“Julie?”

When I called her name because she did not reply-------

“If that’s the case then let’s ride it once more”

While looking at the tea cup with glowing eyes, Julie made a crazy sentence and------

“Gyaaaaaaaaaa-------!!”

After a few minutes, my shout echoed in the blue sky…….

When we were able to move, we took our time with relaxing attractions to recover our energy before heading to the Gun action and the looping ship-----

Next off, we decided to ride the Sky river ride Tachibana requested.

Just like how it’s described, it’s a rubber boat flowing down from a 30 meter high in high speed.

The round rubber boat has a maximum capacity of four so, me, Tachibana and Tsukimi were sitting on one but-------

"……"

"Don't look so unwilling. It's hurtful"

"It's not like I am unwilling or anything. It's just that, a trouble might occur------not that, it's just that I am together with someone that might cause trouble……..."

"Kuhahaha ♪ Correct there, <<Irregular>> ♥"

"Don't say correct!!"

I immediately retorted to Tsukimi who took on a cute pose while using her bad mouth tone.

"There there, Kokonoe. Both her hands are restrained and I don't think Tsukimi-sensei would cause something to happen though……"

There is no safety belt in the rubber boat so we have to hold on the grip inside for the whole ride.

I feel that letting go will cause falling off the course due to irregular spinning and bouncing.

"No, there is enough possibility that Tsukimi can cause something even in that state"

"Kuhah. You have terrible trust issues, Oi"

"That's one nasty way to put it"

"Well, just give up and get on already"

After she took a pose of wanting to kick my back, I made a sigh while getting onto the rubber boat.

"Osshi, took your neighbor seat ♪"

Oh crap. She sat beside me since I was the first one to get on.

"……"

I moved to the other side and sat at a position opposite Tsukimi-----but, Tsukimi moved again and sat beside me.

I moved to the other side one more time but the result was the same.

"What are you doing? You will cause problems to the back if you don't sit down already"

While making sense, Tachibana entered the ride and the unproductive game of chase ended.

As a result, Tsukimi was sitting at my right side while Tachibana is in front-------(We just have to stop her before she does something)------the rubber boat we were riding on suddenly start flowing.

"Fufu, this slow rotation is enough to have fun with"

Tachibana said this when the boat was rotating around irregularly.

I recalled back the nightmare of the Tea cup and *You got that right* agreed with her but------ "To, uwaaaah!?"

Suddenly, *Boing* the boat bounced.

I got attacked by the feeling similar to the float inside an elevator and the ride immediately started to slide.

"That was surprising……"

"Fufu, that was quite a surprise"

"Yeah. It was quite a thrill thanks to the float just now"

After Tachibana happily replied my "Surprise", the rabbit ears looked towards us.

“Kuhah. Sorry for jumping in the fun but, now’s the hyper fun time from this point on ☆”

“”-------!!””

My cautiousness turned on when I saw Tsukimi move really fast.

But, Tsukimi’s unexpected action has found its way through my cautiousness.

Tsukimi released one hand from the grip-----

“Here we go ♪”

“”Eh…….?””

She pinched Tachibana’s skirt up.

Of course, the panties inside could be seen.

Me & Tachibana froze.

And, Tsukimi laughed stupidly.

“Seeing panties other than mine sometimes increases the number of variations right? Kuaahyahyahya ♪”

“~~~~~~~~~~~~~!!”

With her senses back, Tachibana quickly hid her underwear with both her hands.

Boing

The boat bounced immediately after.

Of course, Tachibana could not stay in place since both her hands were free-----

She fell into my chest as if I was hugging her.

“”……””

Both of us froze------

“Whyaaaaaaaaaa!? S-sorry Kokonoe! I-i----“

Tachibana separated from me and quickly stood up.

“Ta-Tachibana. If you stand-----“

Even though I warned her it was dangerous; it was too late.

Inside the rotating boat, Tachibana lost her balance.

“Tachibana!”

Because her butt was facing me, I ended hugging her from behind with one hand.

Funyon

“Hyafuu!?”

……..what’s this soft thing my hand is grabbing.

No, even I know what I am grabbing right now.

I was just running away from reality-----but, the world just doesn’t work that way.

Funyon Funyon Funyon Funyon Funyon

The shaking from the irregular boat movement moved my hands in opposition to my will.

wahwahwah it really is soft; it’s changing its shape in my hand.

“Hya, nkuu, Ko-kokonoe N-no……let go that’s my, ah, nnn, breast…….fuuaaan, ah, ah,ah, fu, afuuunn……..!”

[Aaaaaaaaaaah, so-so-sorry!!] [Kuhaha, that's one heck of a view, kuahahahaha!]

While Tsukimi was laughing loudly, I quickly let go of her and this happened immediately right after.

Boing

The boat bounced again, and Tachibana's body floated.

(Falling……!)

The moment I thought that, both my hands extended out.

With both hand this time.

……again with Tachibana's breast.

Funyon Funyon Funyon Funyon Funyon, Funyon Funyon Funyon Funyon Funyon

"Fuwaaa, Hnn, ann, Kokono-e, Eh, sto, aaafuu, my weird voice is coming, out……ah, fu…….Nyooo, let go, Kokonoe, Kokono-e, aaah, ah……..Fuaaaaaah!!"

"That was fun right, Julie-chan"

"Ja—♪ "

A little while after we reached the goal, Miyabi's group got off since they were behind us.

"Ah, Kokonoe-kun. The sky river was really fun……..wait, err? Where's Tonoe-chan and Sensei?"

"E-eerr…….for a light run…….?"

After Tachibana shouted [Forget it before I get back!!], Tsukimi chased after her to tease her about the event and they ended up going somewhere.

Not long later, both of them came back--------(It seems she wasn't caught in the end)-----so, we headed to the next attraction.

But-----

"Mogah!?"

My mouth was suddenly covered from behind when we were grouping up.

Since we had to line up, everyone else who lined up for the attraction was already ready to set off so my call for help was futile and I had to give up to let myself get pulled back.

The person who suddenly covered my mouth----was Tsukimi.

(Hey hey, don't resist, <<Irregular>>!!)

"R-rhat, are you hoing…….!?"

(Shut up and follow me!!)

"Forrow you? Oo-oihi, ir's abrout hrime to groo……!?[1]"

Not caring about the panicking me, Tsukimi pulled me away while covering my mouth.

Unluckily, no one noticed this situation (Kidnapping?)------

The whole act ended when I was brought outside.

"Oi Tsukimi. What was that all about?"

But, Tsukimi not lend her ears to my words and kept on looking around.

[1] It's about time to go

“Oh, found one ♪ Let’s go <<Irregular>>”

After saying that, Tsukimi pulled me off again.

Our goal---was a bench.

“Okay, sit”

“A-aah…….”

While feeling troubled, I sat down like I was told and Tsukimi sat down beside me.

“Fui-----…….”

With her back slowly sliding downwards, she made a big sigh.

Ever since we entered the park, Tsukimi was always in MAX tension but, she looks oddly tired now.

“What’s wrong? Are you tired from being too noisy-----“

“No way, you idiot”

“Then what----Ah……..!”

Tsukimi was top class in stamina within our group but, I have an idea why she’s so tired.

“Don’t tell me your wounds are…….”

“Of course, I was almost dead last week. Since that’s the case, I will be borrowing your knee”

Tsukimi used my knees as a pillow and lie on top.

“Oi Tsukimi……”

“Shut up and don’t make a fuss. This sounds pathetic but I am quite tired so let me rest a little”

“Uu……..”

I have no choice but to obey if she said it that way.

I shut up and tried my best not to move while lending her my knees.

The theme park BGM coming from the surroundings and the sound of laughter and screams could be heard; Tsukimi used her own arms to cover her eyes as a substitute for a sunshade.

I thought it was going to be hot for her so, I opened an attraction map and blocked the sun for her.

“Ooo, as expected from the no.1 pimp in the academy’s history. Your actions are disgusting, you bastard”

“Leaving my polite rejection of that impolite title aside -----“

Since Tsukimi was able to open her mouth, I decided that it’s safe to talk to her.

“It’s still not healed?”

“It’s healed. The hole was closed thanks to the reconstructing healing nanomachines working in full power. I’ll show you in a love hotel if you really want to see you know”

"No thanks"

"…….and it was at this moment, that I thought of going to a love hotel with Tsukimi and-----"

"Stop with the jokes and answer the question about your wounds"

After giving Tsukimi a light knock on the forehead, I made her continue the conversation.

"Seriously, you suck with jokes…….well, just like I told you, my stomach is mostly healed thanks to the nanomachines working hard. The other parts haven't caught up though"

While saying that, i saw a wound left by <<K>> on Tsukimi's eyelid when the eyepatch shifted.

"And, my stamina isn't back yet"

No matter how enhanced the healing capability is increases by the <<Lucifer>>, it takes time to heal a serious wound.

That goes for stamina too.

From what I heard, I understand Tsukimi's current situation although leaving 2 questions out.

Naturally, I asked her about the 2 questions.

"Then why aren't you resting until you recovered. This isn't the time to be saying celebrating your-----"

"……I'll only cause more worry if I don't look energetic"

"Worry, it's true that the class atmosphere-----Ah……!"

The class atmosphere turned brighter.

But more importantly, I recalled a person being very happy when she saw Tsukimi energetic.

“You know. I wanted to fight to the death because I liked it. That’s why even if I slipped up I can push all the responsibility to you but this won’t work on her……..”

With a painful expression, Tsukimi continued talking about that night.

“Right before I was brought into the emergency room, I could hear cries of “It’s my fault”. My consciousness shut down there, and few days passed when I got up……. I no longer could sleep when I start thinking about “What happened to her”, “Was she crying the whole time”…….”

(It’s for Kibitsu huh……)

From the way she spoke, she got out from the medical word the moment she could stand.

“……..Tsukimi. You changed”

Even though I don’t know what type of Tsukimi was before, this felt weird.

“Shut up”

While lying down, Tsukimi chopped my sides.

Honestly; it hurts.

“O-ouch that hurts……!”

“Ah, shut up shut up, I can’t sleep because you are noisy. There’s probably 5 more minutes until they come out, so let me sleep until then. If not, there’s no meaning to bring you here as a replacement for an alarm”

After saying what she liked, Tsukimi closed her mouth and started resting.

“…….Haa, I get it”

I replied with a sigh mixed in.

With her last word------*Me as an alarm replacement", I understood why she brought be out. It's so that she won't show her tired self to Kibitsu no matter what.

(You really changed huh……)

I thought that again after Tsukimi fell asleep and started breathing comfortably.

After 2, 3 minutes passed----

"Hn-ya…….Kokonoe, noo……..Haa-aa…….i told you not there, Fuaa……."

"uuuuuh!?"

Tsukimi suddenly twisted her body and made sweet sounds; and that made my snot spurt out.

(What kind of dream are you seeing!? And why am I appearing in the first place!?)

Having a mysterious dream, Tsukimi was moving her legs while making seductive sounds.

Because of that, gravity was slowly pulling her short skirt, exposing her thighs.

Her panties can be seen if this keeps up.

(T-this is bad…….)

She shows without any problems normally but, I prefer that she would stop these shameless acts.

With that said, I extended my hand to the knee she raised.

*Chon*after poking her knee down, I made it straight back again.

(----okay. Success. Now to put her skirt back……..)

I pinched the edge of her skirt this time and pushed her exposed skirt----

"Iyaaan☆ Kokonoe-kun how daring of you to pull up my skirt, how da.ri.ng ♥"

"Buuu---!?"

"Kuhah. Your true nature appeared huh, you closet pervert"

Tsukimi was smiling with her eyes opened when I looked at her face.

"N-no, this……."

"It. Was. A. lie ♪ I wasn't sleeping from the start ☆You got a boner from my erotic voice & seductive thighs?"

"What------!!"

Tsukimi laughed loudly at my response.

After sighing loudly at Tsukimi-----

I lowered my tone and changed the atmosphere for the conversation.

"……Hey, Tsukimi. I have something I want to ask you"

"Ah?"

"Remember the question I asked during the birthday party? Why didn't you use your <<Blaze>>'s real <<Power>> when you fought-----"

Bam

"Gofuu"

I got hit with a chop again and forcefully made me shut up.

"W-what was that for…….?"

“Hey you know. I finally came here to relax. At least let me get away from work for today”

After getting up, Tsukimi looked at me and said.

“Well, leave that talk for later. I will tell you soon, I will”

She understood the question and replied “Soon”, and added a clear declaration of “I will” so it seems that she has no intentions to run away.

“…….i understand”

After finishing this off, everyone came back when I made a nod.

“Sensei, Kokonoe-kuun, you didn’t you two get in the ride? It was a shocker that both of you disappeared”

Unable to answer Kibitsu who tilted her head and questioned us, I was having trouble in finding an answer when----

“Iyaa, this guy told me he suddenly got a stomachache and had to take a sh○t; we then missed the ride after I brought him to the toilet, Kuhahahaha!”

“Bu------!?”

That’s one useless lie.

“…….we-well, we can’t do anything with physiological problems”

“T-that’s true……but, I think you should change the way you said it, Tooru……”

“Errr……G-good work, Tooru-kun…….”

“Are you okay, Tooru?”

“Aah…….”

I nodded to Julie who touched her stomach.

(Hey, why must I be treated like an elementary school student who has reached his limits and had to go to the toilet!?)

(Kuhahaha! Sacrificing you is the fastest way to get away from the attention)

Perhaps, the reason why Tsukimi brought me out was……

Within the whirlpool of suspicion, Tsukimi lightly tapped my shoulder and whispered.

"Oh, keep that talk just now a secret. Also, I had a light rest. Thanks"

"Tsukimi……"

"Okay, let's go to the next one, next! What's the next one!? Oh, is it the jet coaster again! Nice nice nice, Kuahahahaha!"

Our rabbit homeroom teacher was shouting lively without a glimpse of the tiredness she displayed just now.

After seeing her like that, somewhere inside me, I thought of providing help so that she can have a good rest later.

About the time the sun was going down, we finished our planned attractions leaving one out.

Since we were running out of time; One more------we decided that the [Dark Castle Rescue] Lilith requested will be our last.

"…….i guess this is okay"

In my hands after I mumbled, was a black mantle worn on my shoulders; there is also a horn on my head.

Why am I wearing this? This Dark Castle Rescue is an attraction that allows cosplaying (Additional Fee) when attending.

Within the costumes prepared in the males changing room, I picked the one with Demon king written on it.

(What kind of cosplay are the others going to go with…….)

While thinking about the girl's side, I headed towards the meeting spot after I finished changing.

After waiting for a while, I saw everyone coming out from the female changing room.

"Tooru ♪"

Julie was up front; both her hands were wings, lower body was of a bird and a swimsuit was covering her chest.

When I asked what kind of cosplay to the happy Julie who was flapping her wings; it seems that it's called a harpy. She picked it because it's a bird and that's the reason why she's so happy.

Next was Miyabi.

Her head was decorated with dog (Wolf?) ears while her chest, hips and hands were covered with fur and a tail; she's probably a werewolf.

"Ehehe, this is kind of embarrassing"

On front; I think the swimsuit she wore during the time we were at the beach was more revealing; apparently things are different for her with cosplaying.

Behind her Tsukimi had a swimsuit covering her chest like Julie but her lower half was that of a horse; beside her was Kibitsu wearing a fluffy veil while a half-transparent wing was attached to her back.

Looks like those are, Centaurus and fairy cosplays.

Following behind, was Tachibana in black armor. It matches her long black hair and her completely black appearance from the tip of her head to the bottom of her toe makes her look more dignified than usual.

"……What's that cosplay?"

"The dark knight who serves under the demon king, I guess. The other costumes were very light or oddly revealing ones……..."

It seems that the girls decided that everyone would be in different cosplays and Tachibana looked kind of troubled at the costumes chosen.

"Lilith is left but……."

"Tooooru, sorry for the wait ♪"

"Buu------!?"

I spout out through reflex the instant I saw the gold girl come out last from the changing room.

That's only normal for me to do so, that's because I could only see Lilith wearing a costume that looks only like underwear.

There were horns on her head and wings on her back, there's also a tail behind so this factors are appealing to the fact that this is a cosplay.

"How about this, Tooru?"

"H-how, err……"

I replied back while looking away.

"Hey Tooru. Commenting only works when you look"

Exposed.

Only normal I guess.

Places like her the gap of her attractive breast or sexy hips or her soft looking butt or the dangerous spot covered with little fabric mumble mumble mumble……..

(Where should I look-----!?)

“Li-lilith. I think that outfit is just too outrageous and going too far……..!?”

“I-I don’t there is an underwear-like costume, Lilith-san……”

“I bought it at a nearby shop when we were having a rest. It has “For adults” written on it and I think it’s a little daring but, I thought this would make Tooru happy ♪”

Forget getting happy, i’m so troubled to the maximum.

“I see, that’s for adults. Good for you, <<Irregular>>”

Tsukimi tapped on my shoulders with a grin.

“With that said----how about it, Tooru?”

After making a pose, the gold girl asked me again.

“N-no, well err, Lilith has good style and I think It suits you a lot……”

I somehow answered even though I was flustered.

…….i answered while my gazes were heading downwards more than her face.

Lilith then noticed my gaze.

“Fufu, looks like you enjoy this succubus cosplay, Tooru”

“E-err……..”

“I will pick you up with this when you come to my room alone next time ♥”

The devil whispered at a close distance as if she was going to bite my earlobe.

This is the sad habit of male Part II: this action made me drank my saliva through reflex.

Luckily or unluckily, Julie and Miyabi worked together to pull me away when Lilith was about to cling onto me.

“How sad. I’ll leave this for next time, Tooru ♪”

After the gold girl shrug her shoulders, she winked over to me.

“O-okay then, let’s go”

Within everyone’s attention, I did not answer Lilith and walked away in high pace.

……incidentally, a facilitator (Female) was shocked for an instant when she saw Lilith but, she immediately made a smile back…….Professionals are amazing.

The demon king who got exiled by the hero, has waged war together with his subordinates to regain back his castle-----

This was the story the attraction set; we continuously had solve mysterious puzzles while heading deeper in, until we reach the next floor.

Soon, the demon group solved all the mysteries inside-------we succeeded in reaching the top, defeat the hero and reclaim the castle.

And for the finally, we were going to take a memorable photo with our cosplays on-----

The 2nd “DNL competition for me” event begins.

“Hey, Miyabi. And JulieYou, get away from Tooru”

“I-felt like clinging on Tooru-kun when I saw Li-lilith-san doing it…….!”

“Basically, everything will be fixed if you let go”

“Why am I the only one!?”

Lilith's soft breast on my right elbow, while on my left elbow was Miyabi's voluptuous breast layered by fur.

And just like the 1st round, Julie was hugging from the front for some reason.

"Kuhah. Aren't you going to join in, class rep?"

"W-why would i…..!?"

"Didn't you cry with a nice voice just now?"

"----uuh!? T-th-that was……!!"

"Okaaay, say cheese"

With a tone coming from the heart (But still smiling), the staff pressed the shutter.

I kept on apologizing in my heart……..

"Ahh, Juliet huh. I have this already……."

After leaving the demon king castle, we were given souvenirs from the attraction at the exit.

It seems that it's Death New LandDNL character goods and Lilith sighed when she saw the content.

"Lilith, you need this?"

Even though I tried to give her the goods I received, she swung her head.

"Thank you, Tooru. I'm grateful but I have that already"

Seems like whenever Lilith often come to Death New LandDNL, she would always come to this demon castle and collect the goods here.

Sadly, the good she just received was something she already gained.

Just like Lilith, there was another person dropping her shoulders when she saw the good she received----it was Julie.

“Got something weird?”

“Nau. That is not true but, I wanted the chick……..”

(A chick? Isn’t that----)

Attracted by my sights, Julie also moved her sight to Lilith.

The good in her hand was a chick with a blue crest.

“”…….””

“What is it?”

Lilith noticed our stares-------

“-----! Th-that’s Gecko!”

She opened her eyes wide when she saw the pig nosed bear in Julie’s hand.

Looks like the goods Julie received was the character Lilith aimed for.

“””…….”””

Red and blue----the 2 girls with opposite eye color were moving at each other face and hands respectively.

When I saw them acting like that, I [Looks like both of you want the goods the other received so, how about trading?] said that before stopping my thought.

These 2 normally oppose each other-----(Julie is mainly the one who lashes out)----but, this event might spark an improvement in their relationship even if it’s a little; this was the reason why I stopped.

Things will settle fast if I help but, I am expecting them to step forward independently.

With that said, I restrained my feelings to help and decided to see how things go.

“””……..”””

Peek peek peek peek peek peek peek peek peek peek peek peek peek

Both of the girls look at each other face and hands for a while before-----

[Err……..] [You know……..]

They talked at the same time.

“……you first”

“You can go on ahead first”

“”……..””

[……..Can we trade?] [……want to trade?]

When I heard the different voices coming out; I made a “Yes” pose with my fist in secret.

The chick with a blue crest and pig nosed bear was being traded in front of me.

Julie and Lilith looked at their traded goods and smiled happily------

“…….thank you very much”

“That’s my line too, thank you”

Both of them thanked each other while looking embarrassed.

I felt quite happy when I saw them like that and naturally made a smile.

“Julie, we’re here”

"…….ja---"

When we were going back after Death New LandDNL was fully covered by night time----

About the time we reached the academy's monorail, the silver girl started dozing off in just a few minutes before jolting her shoulders.

But, even though Julie instantly opened her eyes, she started dazing off again.

(She was quite lively today so, it can't be helped huh……)

I gave the girl who went to an amusement park for the first time (She doesn't think so though)--- the girl who played until she was tired, a piggy back.

(She's so light…….)

After seeing her sleeping this comfortably; she doesn't look like an <<Ell Awake>>----another existence that has transcended humans different from us <<Exceed>>.

"Oh my, did that girl fall asleep?"

After getting off the monorail, Lilith talked to me in a low tone after getting off first.

"She has been playing pretty hard so, she probably got tired because of that"

"……Looks like it"

The reason why she answered it with such distant eyes was probably recalled back the time when we were at the Teacup.

"Well, I am glad she enjoyed Death New"

Looks like that's an important point to the Death New LandDNL lover Lilith.

"Fufu, I had fun too. It's thanks to Lilith that we can move around effectively"

"I-I had a lot of fun too……."

"Oh my, those are some kind words. If it's like that, I'll be recommending a lot of things when we come back next time"

Tachibana started a conversation and Miyabi joined in.

"*Giggle*. It will be nice if Tora-kun and the others would join at that time"

"Fumu. We won't be going there to celebrate Kibitsu-sensei's discharge during that time so I think they would join in then"

"That would be nice but the problem would be-----"

Adding in to Miyabi and Tachibana's conversation, I looked towards Tsukimi and Kibitsu walking in front of us before talking.

"I think the grouping with Tsukimi will be important……."

Everyone laughed at a volume so that we won't wake Julie after hearing that sentence.

"Let's come back and play with everyone"

"True. Let's do that"

Lilith giggled with consent while Tachibana and Miyabi nodded afterwards.

Next time------

The silver girl sleeping behind me will probably nod in happiness too.

Just like this, a day dedicated to celebrate Tsukimi's discharge has reached an end.

Part 2

The 1st year girls would sometime host a tea party with no males allowed.

If there are times only for talk, they would sometimes play games, or sometimes make food; this is a time for the girls to enjoy in various ways.

During those moments, they aren't <<Exceeds>> aiming to be members of the Ethanarch but rather they will be showing their faces as normal high school females.

And for tonight; they were making cookies with Miyabi as the center.

They borrowed a kitchen oven and were waiting for the cookies to bake while talking at a corner of the cafeteria.

The baking process ended after around 10 minutes later, "Oh it smells good", while making a commotion on how weird the shape changed, the cookie was taken out from the oven was transferred to plates-----

"I-I am going to share some of this with Kokonoe-kun. Everyone go to the discussion room first"

After saying that, Miyabi put a portion into one bag before heading out from the cafeteria with the bag.

Due to what Miyabi said, it's only natural that the topic of the remaining girls would be about Miyabi.

[She went to grab him by the stomach huh] [She's so assertive recently] [She's brave, a good girl, and have big breasts; there should be a limit on how much a herbivore Kokonoe is to not fall for her……]

And right after a girl said that, all of the girls looked towards the silver girl at the same time.

[Isn't his manhood weird the moment he did not lay his fingers on Julie?] [It's true that Julie's super cute but, she feels more like a sister right?] [Kokonoe feels like the athletic type so, he probably washed off his desires together with his sweat]

Tooru has been feeling troubled about this topic too but, this is how he's being treated by the side lines.

Although Julie was being compared to Miyabi; Julie and Tomoe took one cookie each and was enjoying the baked flavor.

"It's so soft and delicious"

"Fufu, that's true. But, let's eat the rest in the discussion room"

"Ja--. Let's do that"

After Julie nodded, Tomoe told the others to move to the discussion room.

After the girls moved out from the cafeteria as a group, the girls poured their preferred tea or juice in the lounge before heading to the discussion room located at the 3rd floor which is the girl's floor.

"Julie, I have something I want to ask you"

"What might that be?"

When Miyabi wasn't around-----

One of the girls gathered in the discussion room threw the question most of their classmates were wondering before, towards the silver girl.

"Julie, are you in love with Kokonoe?"

(((She said it-----!!)))

Most of the girl waited for Julie's answer in interested as if "This was finally asked".

Tomoe was mixed inside too.

But for Tomoe's case, she wasn't interested but rather she was deeply conscious that there might be a rival.

“If you’re talking about Tooru, then yes I am……what about it?”

(((I knew it-----!!)))

The reason why that answer was understood by the girls was because they normally see the attitude Julie shows when she’s with her adored Tooru.

“T-then, how do you feel about Miyabi being your rival?”

The reason why she didn’t ask about Lilith was because they know about the fact that Julie does not go well with her unlike Miyabi.

“-----by rival, you mean?”

The atmosphere filled with [Huh?] popped up when Julie tilted her small head.

“E-errr, apparently Miyabi loves Kokonoe too but, how do you think about that……..”

“I am happy that Miyabi has fallen in love with Tooru. Tooru is a very gentle person after all”

The girls felt further troubled when they heard the silver girl’s reply.

“Errr……..what do you like about Kokonoe, Julie”

Thinking that there might be something else, one of the girls questioned her again.

“…….the part on how he’s gentle like a papa”

“…..i-I see…….”

(That’s just too far off……..) (A father complex huh…….) (I feel sorry for Kokonoe if he’s aiming for Julie……..)

“-------?”

Julie tilted her small head again and was feeling “What’s wrong” while looking at the girls talk.

Tomoe felt relieved while looking at Julie acting like that----

She then felt a question to her feelings.

(Why did you feel relieved, just now……?)

After a while of thought, the pure girl reached a conclusion.

(……..I see. I feel relieved that she didn’t become Miyabi’s rival huh, Umu)

There’s a strong rival even under normal circumstances called Lilith so, she thought her <<Duo>> was in a huge trouble; Tomoe nodded at her own thoughts.

This girl is pure to the bone.

When asked on what she likes about him-----

The event that occurred a few days ago in the clock tower floated in Julie’s mind.

The expression Tooru showed and the words Tooru said.

That short time was the reason.

Julie does not know why this event appeared in her mind.

That’s why she said her normal thoughts in the end.

It’s an unnoticeable small change that no one knew-----

Chapter 5 『The Realm Of The End』

Part 1

With a loud bang, a target 20 meters away from hit swung.

“Fi-finally, It hit……..”

I lowered the gun while sighing.

“Fufuu, you can hit with your eyes closed if you get used to it”

While looking at me-----(Basically not concentrating), Lilith hit the furthest target at a distance of 50 meters.

(Just how used must I get to do that……)

While sighing one more time, I reloaded my empty magazine and took stance with the gun again.

Yes, I am holding a gun right now.

Summer break passed------(This started when I was hospitalized)------we were currently attending shooting practice.

People will wonder “There’s a weapon called <<Blaze>> though” but, there are various kind of missions when we join the Ethanarch after graduation. To take those various situations into consideration, we have to take part in shooting training.

And regarding about the firing zone, there was no air conditioning due to the fact that it’s outdoor.

Due to that, it’s obviously hot.

But, this environment was also part of the training.

Shooting training gives a strong image being take placed indoors but, it’s more practically outdoors since things get harsher as time passes compared to a stable condition.

When we were focused on shooting non-stop in this harsh heat----(The bullet were practice bullets used even by the Ethanarch), I could hear the 3rd period end bell signifying break time from afar.

“Break time Breaaak time ♪As a precaution, there will be a restriction to shoot during break time ☆Also please remember hydrate yourself I won’t care if you fall ♥

We listened to Tsukimi who urged us to hydrate ourselves *Pan**pan* while clapping her hands, and placed the sports drink into our mouth.

“Julie. Are you okay?”

“Ja--. Miyabi set that up for me”

The silver girl pointed at the plastic bottle with ice inside which was placed on her head.

I was wondering what it was meant for but, Julie was showing a satisfied and comfortable expression because it’s cold.

“This is quite hard”

I sat beside her and looked at the targets while nodding.

“Yeah. I feel gloomy every time I think that there is this class every week”

I definitely prefer trainings that require movements compared to studying but, even my mood will drop if I can’t hit the target as expected.

(I think throwing the gun directly has higher accuracy……..)

When I was thinking that------

“Fuun, you can normally hit if you can maintain the correct shooting posture”

Tora displayed a score only inferior to Lilith in class; he came closer to us with a “It’s my win!” expression.

“Oh my, I think I’m used to it you know?”

“…….No one asked you”

“Don’t be so boring, Tora. Tooru’s in the core of the topic so why not”

“Don’t casually call my name”

(Uuuun, same as usual)

Ever since the incident Lilith caused when she enrolled, Tora has created a one-sided wall.

I understand that getting cornered isn’t fun but, I think holding a grudge for that is just going too far.

(I wish he would be friendlier with Tatsu at least……)

Since they always quarrel, I can’t describe Tora and Tatsu to be friendly.

But, things won’t get any worse from this and they are sort of like good buddies------

“Wait, err, where’s Tatsu?”

“Tsukimi dragged that idiot away because he threw the gun at the target through irritation that he could hit anything”

……I have to be careful.

“Looks like you are having it tough, Kokonoe”

“Haha, well yeah”

Tachibana joined us while wiping off sweat with a towel.

Miyabi could be seen behind her.

“Fufu, even you have something you suck other than class lectures”

Tachibana who started a conversation while laughing, had good shooting skills although it couldn't be compared to the gold girl. Apparently, the Tachibana style 18 arts had shooting techniques included inside so, she has accumulated quite some training on rifles and handguns.

"H-how about getting a lecture by Tomoe-chan too, Tooru-kun……..?"

"Fumu. I don't mind so, how about it?"

Maybe because she learned some tricks from Tachibana, I saw Miyabi getting hits from time to time.

(That sounds nice too---)

When I thought about it, i remembered the scene about how Miyabi was taught.

The scene includes: Tachibana wrapping around Miyabi from behind to support her arms which were holding the gun, causing high contact on the back.

"I-I'll go solo for a while, hahaha……"

"Well, if you say so…….but, if you are still having problems after a while, don't bother too much and come to me"

After I replied "l'll do that" with a wry smile, Miyabi mumbled softly while looking at us.

"It would be nice if I was good enough to teach Tooru-kun"

The imagination just now switched to Miyabi from Tachibana but I swung my head to get rid of it from my head.

[To-tooru-kun, what's wrong…….?] [The heat got into your head, Kokonoe?]

"No, I just thought "I wonder if it will get cooler if I swung my head"……."

While making the excuse “I definitely lost to the heat”, I made an empty laughter but-----

“Hold your horses. Shouldn’t I be the first person to come to regarding guns?”

Lilith came back to the conversation and I got on too.

“True------was what I wanted to say. I had you teach me just now but, Lilith’s teaching method makes no sense”

“That’s not true”

“It is. Even just now you went, do it like this…..and that. That’s the only thing you said”

While explaining to her about what she said, I imitated the movements she performed when she taught me.

“Nope. It’s like that…..then this”

With x100 speed compared to me-------(She probably thinks she’s slow)-----she made a stance but, I have no idea what she meant by nope at all.

“Come on……is this the, Geniuses are bad in teaching scenario? More importantly, Lilith----You use one hand to shoot while we have to maintain both hands while firing”

“One or both hand does not matter. The most important factor needed in shooting is to know the characteristics of the gun. Though I say that, this logic goes for all kinds of weapon”

The gold girl’s sentence shocked us.

“Kuhah. As expected from the Ojou-sama. So this is the “a good workman’s does not blame her tool[2]” huh”

I ignored her here.

[2] (She actually used a dirty sentence here: (Most likely) Any dick fits her hole huh-AKA calling her a slut) This can be changed if found incorrect-コーモン筆を下ろさずってやつだな)

In the other half of the shooting training------4th period started and about 30 minutes passed.

“Hooold up ♥ Lift your hand and listen to Sensei ♪”

“Okay Sensei”

I thought “Isn’t it stop your hands?” but one girl-Kibitsu lifted her hand.

“Okay okay, looks like there are good kids here with good hit rate already so we will change the training menu ☆With that said, follow Sensei ♥”

After saying that, Tsukimi hopped outside the training zone.

While feeling troubled about what is going on, we follow her and-----

The place we reached was the outdoor battle arena.

When we came out from the entrance, we came out at the middle level of the audience seat.

We can look at the whole coliseum from here----

For some reason, there’s a sandbag in the middle of the coliseum. On top of the tightly packaged bag of sand, a 5 meter circle was drawn with a thick rope.

This outdoor battle arena was used for the <<Blaze Practice>> last semester but, that sandbag was definitely not there at that time.

This unmistakably was prepared for the event that is about to come.

(……I have a really bad feeling here)

This might sound unlikely but, is she going to tell use to have a 1 vs 1 inside that small circle?

When I was imagining that, Tsukimi turned around and spread her arms.

"Okay, let's play a game for 10 minutes ♪ with that said, Kokonoe-kun. You----are the ***target***"

"Huh?"

"Like I said, you will be running around inside the coliseum ☆ And everyone will be *Bang bang* targeting you ☆ Understand, okay?"

Tsukimi made a gun gesture and posed a shot at me.

"I see, so that's what you meant……..Wait a second----!?"

"No waiting ♪ Aiming a moving target is more practical ☆"

My bad feeling came true.

But, it has crossed my imagination.

However, Tsukimi's intention was not moving forward this time.

Because-----

[White Usa-sensei, this going a little too far……..] [Yeah, shooting someone is just……..."

Everyone's faces were gloomy and started causing noises while speaking out in hesitant.

"Hnnn, you don't have to worry about that problem…….well, proof is better than theory in this situation"

After Tsukimi said so tiredly-----

Tan she kicked the ground and perform a somersault mid-air before landing into the coliseum.

"Ojou-sama, one bullet from there please?"

While waving, Tsukimi called out to Lilith.

She picked the person that while 100% hit her without any hesitation.

Of course, Lilith agreed and pointed the gun at Tsukimi before----she shot her.

Tsukimi's hand moved at the same time everyone instantly felt shaken-----

A *Psssst* sound could be heard.

"Nice catch ♪"

A practice bullet fell on the sand when Tsukimi opened her clenched hand.

Of course, it's the bullet Lilith shot.

[Amazing……..] [Are you serious……..] [She caught it…….]

"I said this before ♪ you can more or less dodge bullets when you cross <<Level 4IV>> ☆ If you can see it and dodge, then you can do this too ♪"

While looking everyone in the class causing a stir, Tsukimi smiled while saying this.

"Just like what I explained in class: the higher you rise in <<Level>>, physical abilities aren't the only factors that will be enhanced; your body will also become sturdier too. The guns you all are using right now are only meant for suppression so the firepower has been set to low; 1 or 2 shots at the <<Level 4IV>> Kokonoe-kun will……kind of hurt and won't kill him, so rest assured and go crazy ☆"

…….did I just hear her say "kind of hurt" just now.

Leaving that aside, even though she said that, it's not like everyone plunged right into it.

Tsukimi felt the hesitant air and pointed at her head before announcing.

“Ojou-sama, one more shot ♪ This time---over here ☆”

Tsukimi was pointing at her head.

Without a care about the classmates that caused a stir again, Lilith listened to her, aimed and pulled the trigger.

Tsukimi’s head bounced backwards with a *Thud*----

“See ♥”

Even though she received a headshot, she said it without breaking a smile; sounds of amazement were leaking everyone.

Incidentally, everyone was already told that I have gained special permission to sublimate to <<Level 4IV>> because a serious emergency occurred in the training last time-----(During the <<Killing Spree>>).

Also, everyone found out that Julie had an emergency special sublimation too during the <<K>> assault a few days ago.

“Also also, this will be defense training for Kokonoe-kun so this training is 2 birds with one stone ☆ Which means it’s a win win relationship ♪”

[I see, if that’s the case…..] [True. A little pain isn’t that much……..]

After Tsukimi finished her explanation and demonstration, the atmosphere around the class started to change.

As expected, the word “Won’t wound him” has turned into a big reason and it was giving them encouragement.

“----!? Hey, everyone!?”

Tsukimi gave the next blow to interrupt my panicked words.

“For people who don’t want the Restaurant pass; you can get a special bonus for your next month allowance instead ♥”

“””--------!!”””

The atmosphere coming off from half of everyone when they heard that sentence changed and they all looked at me at the same time.

…….Miyabi's eyes came into view.

"The first person to destroy Kokonoe-kun will receive a pair invitation to a high-class famous Emperor Hotel restaurant ♪"

Most of the remaining eyes looked at me.

[I don't plan to lose a match from the start but, my interest increased a fold if a date with Tooru is a consolation prize] [Bonus…….!] [I'll invite Izumi to the Emperor Hotel restaurant…….!] [The castrate Kokonoe alliance, FIGHT!!] [OOOOHH!!] [A date with Tooru-kun a date with Tooru-kun a date with Tooru-kun……..!!] [Miyabi, we will help you!!] [A meal with Sensei!!]

Right now, a crazy swirl of desire was filling the coliseum.

The people who maintained their calm state and would help were 3 people: Julie, Tora,and Tachibana.

First with Julie-----

"If that person wins, she will date Tooru…….i will not let that happen so rest assured, Tooru"

Since her competitive urges towards Lilith were burning inside, she was not calm at all.

I moved my sights to the side and looked to Tora----

"Fuun. This is stupid-----but, this is training. Good luck there, Tooru"

It's a calm judgement but, he looks cold-hearted to me.

The only one I can count on is Tachibana.

"Tsukimi-sensei, this is too much, Kokonoe will-----"

"Well well, Class rep. Listen to this"

"Huh? Listen to what……..?"

After getting back to the audience seat, Tsukimi wrapped around Tachibana's shoulders and pulled her to closer.

When I peeked in because I got curious, Tsukimi took out her cellphone and fiddled it.

"***Fuwaaa, Hnn, ann, Kokono-e, Eh, sto, aaafuu, weird voice is coming, out……ah, fu…….Nyooo, let go, Kokonoe, Kokono-e, aaah, ah……..Fuaaaaaah***!!"

"Buuu-------!?"

Tachibana spurt out so strong that snot might fly out.

"Wha-whawha, wh-wh-when, di-did, yo-you record…….!?"

"Of course, At. That. Time ♥"

Tachibana opened and closed her mouth like a goldfish in response to Tsukimi making a "Win pose" with a smile.

"I'll broadcast this in school if you don't go all out ☆"

twitch

Tachibana's expression froze.

"Ta-tachibana……..?"

Tachibana slowly looked to me when I called out to her------

"Kokonoe, prepare yourself…….!"

Together with those words, my last hope was gone.

Tsukimi then explained the rules.

Time limit: 10 minutes; everyone has 40 bullets each and it's the end when they run out of bullets.

Participants are restricted to step in the arena and have to shoot from the audience seat. However, in order to prevent injuries from friendly fire, a 120 degree from the middle of the arena can only be used.

On the other hand, I am out the moment one hit lands. However, I am in the safe if it's just a graze.

But, the most important factor is that, I am permitted to use my <<Shield>>------(What's more, I have a 3 time limit to use the <<Aegis Desire>>.

More importantly, I concentrated to the training that's about to start.

(I can use the <<Aegis Desire>> huh……)

It's not often I can get defense training with all attacks coming from many dimensions.

Adding on, I am able to use the <<Aegis Desire>> even though there is a limit set, this is a special training that seldom happen even if I wish for it.

……..i don't feel like going through this unless I think this way though.

(Okay, I'll aim for dodging!)

I switched my mood and confirmed the remaining rules.

My movable radius is the 5 meter circle made on the arena.

If I take one step out of the circle, it has been set that the remaining people with bullets will have a lucky draw for the restaurant rights or the bonus.

……..however, it seems that the budget will be taken from me if that's the case. In a certain sense, it hurts more than getting hit by the practice bullet and this gives me a good reason to dodge.

And if I don't take even one hit, the rights will go to me.

(It's Out if I leave the circle……)

When I looked inside the circle, it felt unexpectedly wide-----but, this will turn out different when it starts.

This limited space will definitely chain me down.

Depending on the people, there are some of them that won't be able to track me down if I run around the whole coliseum.

But, if I am in this circle, everyone will be able to see me due to the distance and will not lose me.

There's quite a gap between us but, they won't lose track of me in this 5 meter circle.

(Around 20-30 meters huh…….)

Although the bullets will land on me instantly at this distance, I promised to myself to take this on.

And at this moment, Tsukimi announced to everyone that everything was about to start.

I manifested the <<Shield>>, lowered my hips, took a deep breath----and concentrated.

"Okay then. Readyyyyy…..GOOOO ♪"

[Get wrecked Kokonoe!!] [Sorry about this, Tooru-kun!!] [Emperor Hotel!!] [Sensei!!]

All the triggers were pulled at the same time Tsukimi signaled them, and I also took a big leap to the side with the same timing.

Since it's everyone aimed at the spot I stood at the same time, I perfectly dodged it; Was what I thought-----

"Too naïve, Tooru ♪ "

Lilith read my moves and her bullet was approaching.

"Kuh!!"

Gaan!! Right before I was about to lose by a headshot without even lasting for 1 second after start; I barely blocked the bullet with my <<Shield>>.

"Ahh, so close"

Snap Lilith clicked her fingers and looked regretful.

(That was close! That definitely would hit if it was her <<Rifle>>……..!!)

Same goes of Lilith's <<Rifle>>, the suppressive guns everyone was using has lower firepower compared to real guns and that means the speed is slower.

Of course, it still has the speed that's humanly impossible to see but, that's a big difference for me.

But, I had not time to feel relieved that I was saved by the difference in bullet speed because bullets were flying at me one after another.

"Kuh!!"

The vision that is able to see bullets moving at 100+mph, and the physical abilities + reaction speed to dodge it.

This is the wall standing between <<Level 3III>> and <<Level 4IV>>-----

I can feel the actual difference now.

Nonetheless, there's no way I can fully dodge immeasurable numbers of bullets.

Instantly, I noticed the big mistake I made at the beginning.

Since I took a big leap to the side from the position I was standing just now; I am now at the side of the circle----

Because of that, my escape route was limited to the left side.

And more importantly, with Tachibana and Tora as the leader, several people pulled the trigger while aiming at my dodging directions because it was very predictable.

(Damn it, I can't dodge! If that's it then----)

"Sever the fang----<<Aegis Desire>>!!"

The instantly deployed barrier blocked the bullets and surprised voice could be heard.

It was told to everyone that I gained this ability when I sublimated to <<Level 4IV>> but, looks like they can't hide their shock now that they actually get a glimpse of it.

I opened the barrier when the bullets stopped.

(This won't be training if I shut myself in like this)

Even though I have 2 more times, I made a rule that I would use it only for an instant.

"Hey hey, time is going to run out if you all daydream ☆"

Everyone came back from their daze after Tsukimi's clap and started lining up their guns again.

(That one was no good. I won't be able to dodge the attack when I land from a big jump. I have to minimize my movements and deflect the hard ones with the <<Shield>>……!)

While reflecting on my mistakes, I started countering the bullet storm again.

While using the <<Shield>>, I perform dodges while being cautious with my leg and body swings.

(Remember the moves Tachibana taught in these past few months!! Think of this as a chance to show off your results!!)

"Look at me carefully, Tachibana!!"

Bullets stopped for some reason when I said that.

"Hn?"

"-------!? W-what are you saying all of a sudden, you!?"

Just when I was wondering what was happening, Tachibana's face was red and was scolding me.

“I am just telling you to look at the moves I gained from your teachings though…….?”

As expected, telling her everything in a bullet storm is impossible so I gave her a straightforward sentence.

“Why is that?” When I twist my head wondering why this is related to the reason why everyone stopped attacking-----

“Don’t use such weird ways to say that!!”

“Wait, what!? What do you mean by weird!?”

Tachibana shot me in anger and I had to deflect the bullet with the <<Shield>> in panic.

Everyone quickly lined up their guns and started firing again.

(Wh-what is going on here!?)

And even though I was wondering why, I will be unable to dodge the approaching bullets with a disturbed mind.

My consciousness changed when my cheeks was grazed.

(Focus, focus, focus, focus…….!)

After focusing in dodging, the question disappeared in my mind.

“Scatter about! Shooting in front will only make things easier for Tooru!!”

Everyone spread out to the maximum limits after listening to Tora, there were some people moving higher on the audience seat.

“Shooot-------!!”

Together with Tora’s order, bullets started flying at me from various directions.

(Damn it Tora, I will remember this----!!)

Unable to get the time to rest, I had to block with my <<Shield>>, dodge bullets that I can't block with small or big moves and there were times when I had to dodge the bullets by falling onto the sand without feeling any shame or embarrassment-----

Soon, the event was able to reach to the remaining 1 minute without me getting hit.

"Haa……Haa……."

Under the scorching sun, I was sweating profusely while breathing wildly.

Even though I was an <<Exceed>>, continuously dodging attacks from all directions---(what's more under the condition of not getting hit) and defending against high-speed bullets, is very tiring.

Adding into the problem, since Tora changed the strategy by aiming at my lower body since it was harder to block it with my shield, this made me to move around more and this would increase my tiredness.

But, most of the people in the shooting side were out of ammo so, the only one remaining were the usual faces except for Miyabi-----Julie, Lilith, Tachibana and Tora.

It looks like Julie is bad with the gun like me so I guess I don't have to focus on her.

And unexpectedly, Lilith isn't that much scary of an opponent either.

Although her accuracy is very high, she would aim for Headshots or Heart shots due to pride.

(Okay then……who would be the first one to move)

With 1 minute left on the clock, we were glaring at each other.

Since they are low on ammo, they would probably go for the finisher because there was little time.

I have used the <<Aegis Desire>> twice so I have only remaining one more.

As for what timing I would use it, it would probably be when I use it to end this match.

The person who initiated----was the gold girl.

She pointed the gun at me and shouted.

“Okay, Tooru! The next bullet will be a challenge!!”

While being cautious of the gold girl who claimed that she was at her last shot, I did not lower my guard towards the others.

Tann! Lilith’s trigger was the signal for her last attack.

Without any change, this was an accurate snipe towards my heart------- to the end, this attack suits Lilith.

“But…….it’s too straightforward!!”

It was easy to guard my heart with the <<Shield>> and the moment I shouted that it was so easy to block the bullet------

Lilith raised the side of her mouth and winked at me.

“Sorry, Tooru……it’s a Fake”

“Wha!?”

Lilith ***pulled the trigger once more***.

What’s more, it was aimed towards my thigh which was different from the shots until now.

“Uh…….Kuah……!!”

Right before-----I was hit, I immediately twisted my body and the bullet grazed my thighs.

“Safe ♪”

Tsukimi spread both her right and left hands and declared her judgment.

“Ah, come on! Why would you dodge that! And the bullets are too slow, dang gun!”

Feeling regret, Lilith covered her face and looked upwards.

But by my perspective after dodging that hard shot; that shot just now was one that brought forth the final disaster.

With my balance broken, they did not miss the chance that was formed.

[Now, Tachibana!!] [Umu, this is the end!!]

Both of their guns headed out for the finisher.

(…….2!? Where’s Julie!?)

At this moment, I saw something.

I saw Julie jumping up into the sky from the highest step of the audience seat.

Immediately, Tora and Tachibana started pulling their triggers one after another and were blasting off their remaining bullets.

And at the same time, Julie pulled the trigger while she was up in the blue sky-----(What’s more, it seems that she was reserving her ammo so it was quite a barrage).

Her accuracy might be bad but, might dodges will be limited if she scatter the bullets like a rain from above.

Tora and Tachibana’s bullets approached too.

I endured the 3 away attack coming from above and the side by using my <<Shield>> and leg movements to its limits before-----

I instantly released the <<Power>> that would bring this to the end.

“<<Aegis Desire>>!!”

I activated the dome-shaped barrier and managed to block all the remaining approaching bullets-----this is the end.

Tora and Tachibana sighed heavily and lowered their gun.

At the same time, sighs and voices of regrets could be heard from the people that lost.

But, immediately, a voice appeared from a different direction----Yup, it's from above.

"Tooru……!"

"Buu!? Julie!?"

After looking up, (maybe because she shot an unfamiliar gun in mid-air or maybe it's from the impact from the gun), No matter what reason it is, Julie is falling from above.

Even so, there were no signs of her trying to handle the situation by using the <<Wind Jerzu>>.

At this rate, she will slam into the hard sand arena.

"Look out…….!"

I stepped a few steps forward to catch the silver girl.

Chirin The bell rang loudly.

Immediately after, *Gashaa* Julie's gun dropped on the sand with a thud.

"Are you okay, Julie!?"

"Ja---. I am safe thanks to you"

I feel relieved after seeing the silver girl nod.

"Can you stand?"

After confirming this fact before putting her down, Julie nodded once more before-----

"But before that; Thank you very much, Tooru……..and sorry"

She said something weird.

"Huh? What do you mean?"

Even without answering my question, Julie showed the answer by her actions-----(She *Ton* lightly tapped my chest with something inside her hand)

“Eh……?”

“I got a hit”

“…….”

The object inside her small hand------was a practice bullet.

“EeeeEEEeeeEeHHH-----!?”

“Okaaay, THE EEEND ☆ It’s Kokonoe-kun’s lost lost ♪”

“W-wait, is that even valid!?”

It’s true that the rule says, ***No one is to step into the arena*** and her legs didn’t reach the floor since I was carrying her now but-----

“Valid! And it’s a Safe since it was 3 seconds before times up!”

Tsukimi raised one hand up 45 degrees downwards and shouted before----

Next off, she then raised it straight up----

“With that said, you got tricked good there, <<Irregular>>! Gyahahahaha!! You got reversed at the end just when you thought you won! Ahyahyahyaha ♪”

Even though it’s valid, this is what getting a blow is like.

“What the heck……”

I wouldn’t even imagine that she would hide a bullet which she slipped out from the magazine in her hand.

She even went as far as to drop her gun so that I won’t be cautious too.

"……..Sorry for using such a dirty trick, Tooru"

Julie lowered her head even though she won.

"Ah, no, it's my fault for lowering my guard so don't worry about it. Well, Lilith might be okay but, It was shocking because i never thought Julie would use such a hand"

"Hey, Tooru. What did you meant when you said it's okay if it's me?"

The gold girl got closer while puffing her cheeks.

"I-I didn't mean anything bad, I meant you are hard to deal with. Well you know, like what happened just now……."

"Hard to deal with, it doesn't sound like praise at all you know?"

Lilith pouted her lips and came closer.

"N-no, errr……..hahaha……."

"Fuun, I can't pretend to miss that comment there. I'm the one who taught Julie that plan so take back the comment that she might do it, Tooru!"

"That's right, take it back, Tooru!"

"Eeei, don't ride on my words!"

"Oh my, why not. Don't be such a cheapskate"

"Who's the cheap one!!"

Luckily (?) I escaped their targets and quickly asked the silver girl.

"Errr…… Julie, Was it Tora's plan?"

"Ja---"

Chirin the belled echoed when the silver girl nodded.

I then lightly tapped her head.

“Haha, It’s my complete lost. I just reaffirmed that something natural like lowering my guard at the very end is a bad move”

I said that while laughing and made my face look a little more serious before continuing my move.

“…….But, what was he going to do if I didn’t save you, that damn Tora. I wished he would make a plan with the consideration that Julie might get injured”

“Nai. Tora said, you would save me no matter what happened. Also, I commenced Tora’s plan because I feel that it is true”

As things kept up, I started feeling embarrassed at our trust.

“…….Well, I feel happy that you trust me but, it doesn’t change the fact that it’s dangerous so please do not do that again, Julie”

“Ja--, I’ll do that”

Tsukimi came over with her rabbit ears wobbling around, right when the silver girl made a wry smile.

“Kuhah, how’s this special lesson, <<Irregular>>?”

“I had my fill of satisfaction. I wish to go through that again if there is a chance”

I feel really tired but, this training was good for my defense.

I need concentration and stamina; on top of that I need to carefully plan the timing to use the <<Aegis Desire>> and even though it’s only 10 minutes, the training was quite heavy.

“Kuhah. If you like it so much then let’s do this again. But it will have a tougher content then ☆”

“Yeah, bring it on!”

"……Then, I guess I'll take the prize money from your wallet"

"Ouu……wait, did you mean tough by that!?"

"Kuhahaha! It's a joke ♪ It really is worth teasing you"

Ban Ban Tsukimi slammed my shoulders-----

"----------"

She placed her mouth closer to my ear and mumbled something.

***Come back to this Arena at 8pm, I will continue that story just as promised*……..**

Night time came, and I was spending time with the usual faces in the lounge-----

"About what happened during afternoon, Lilith. In order to use a gun skillfully, one has to know the characteristics of the gun by shooting it several times, was what you said right?"

Tachibana talked to Lilith about the event that occurred at the afternoon shooting training.

"Yes, what about it?"

"If possible, can you teach me the way to understand that characteristic?"

"Okay. Let's see, first off-----"

Tachibana becomes stronger by applying her serious and hardworking personality.

Lilith becomes stronger by applying her free, uncontrolled and genius gift.

Both of them look like they don't match but, the reality is in the opposite.

Especially, it isn't exaggerated to say that Lilith talk to Tachibana the most; leaving Sara and me out from the equation.

(It doesn't have to be as close as Tachibana but, I wished Julie and Tora would be friendlier with her…….)

Especially, since Lilith traded goods with Julie in DNL, I thought their relationship would turn to the better thanks to that but------

From what I can see, it doesn't seem like there was any change.

(The problem won't be solved if I open my mouth after all……..)

I am the problem in the first place.

(------, it's about time)

After looking at the clock and confirming the time was reaching the promised time, I stood up from my seat.

"Where are you going, Tooru?"

Lilith stopped her conversation with Tachibana and asked me.

"…….i thought of going back to my room"

I feel that there's a lot of problem in that sentence but, I reply back so that I won't have to show my face.

"I will go back if Tooru goes back"

After saying that, Julie stood up.

(Oh crap. I should have used the toilet excuse)

Even though I regretted, I immediately thought that I could have said that I would head outside after going to my room for a while.

But-----

Right when we left the lounge, Julie made a shocking sentence.

“Tooru. I am going with you”

“……! Were you listening, Julie……!?”

“Only the word “At night”. But, I felt Tooru was acting weird after that”

When I asked her what part of me was weird, she told me that it was so obvious because I was restless and was oddly fixed on the time.

“But, if the event that is about to happen has secrets you can’t tell me then, I will go back to my room and wait……..”

I was hesitant but, I swung my head sideways.

“No, come with me. I will tell you about what will happen while we walk”

“Then, I will accompany you”

I stood beside Julie and headed outside to the moonlight.

“It finally feels cooling huh”

“Ja---. But it still feels really hot”

When I replied back “I think the heat will continue until mid-September though”, Julie look downwards and looked depressed.

We walked towards the outdoor arena in the night.

I told Julie about the question I felt.

About why Tsukimi did not use her <<Blaze>>’s true <<Power>> when she fought us.

“This is just a speculation but-----it’s not because she did not use it but it’s because she couldn’t use it; and that makes more sense. But that-----“

I stopped my legs in between my sentence and looked up at the Outdoor arena in front of me.

“We might be stepping into the dark part of Kouryou academy”

Now that I stumbled into that possibility; I understood why Julie followed me.

It might be a correct decision to come alone without bringing Julie.

However, I chose to believe the silver girl who I vowed to be a <<Duo>> with.

That’s because I believed that I can overcome future trials if I am with her.

“Even if darkness is waiting for us, I will still chose to be with you”

“Thanks, Julie”

“Ja---♪ “

Maybe it was night time; the arena looks like an abandoned building making it look kind of scary.

But, we stepped inside without any hesitation.

After passing the hall, we reached a spot where we could see the whole arena interior and saw someone standing in the middle of the arena.

“Sorry for the wait, Tsukimi”

“No worries, I just got here ☆……that’s a fixed date speech there. Kuhahah”

“And who’s going on a Date again……..”

While making a puckered face, we jumped off from the audience seat to the arena.

“Hou, silver is with you”

“I am Tooru’s <<Duo>> after all”

Tsukimi silently shrugged his shoulders when she heard Julie’s reply.

“Then let’s make this quick, I want to her the continuation of the conversation we had in DNL. About, why you did not use the true <<Power>> of your <<Blaze>> during the <<Newcomer battleNew blade battle>> when you fought us”

The trigger was during the seaside school.

I questioned this when I saw Tsukimi use the true <<Power>> of her <<Blaze>> when she fought the <<Libels>>.

“It’s hard to use my <<Ouroboros>> in tight places. That also lowers my guard. I just thought it wouldn’t work on clever opponents”

Kuku Tsukimi laughed with her shoulders shaking but, I continued the conversation.

“Last time, the you when you fought us, did not have the power to cause trouble for <<K>>. But, during the fight before, <<K>> said you were trouble to him”

A person that can have an even fight with <<K>> who is equipped with the <<Destruction>>, will never lose to us when we were <<Level 1I>> even if she lowered her guard.

“But-----I now know of a possibility that you might have your current power ever since April”

“What the heck is that? I went in full power with the intention to kill you two. There’s no way I would ever lose to <<Level 1I>> opponents if my strength is what it is now”

Even though she was smiling and denying my speculations----

But, Julie swung her head sideways at that point to deny Tsukimi’s sentence.

“Nai. You can go all-out if your current strength was sealed by using the <<Level Limit>>”

“…….”

“Hey Tsukimi. Last time, you leaded us to the idea that you were hired by a country brimming in justice so that you, that was a lie right?”

Tsukimi scratched her head and sighed loudly when I questioned her.

“Oh damn…….you really stepped into it as expected”

After mumbling-----

“……Enough, Rito. I’ll handle the rest”

“”-------!!””

We gulped when we heard that dignified voice suddenly echo.

“Tooru, over there”

When I followed Julie’s view to the visitor seat, 2 people quietly listening to our conversation appeared under the moonlight.

A girl in Gothic Dress, and a male instructor who is responsible for all subjects in the academy while being the girl’s bodyguard.

“Chairman, and also Mikuni-sensei……..”

“Good evening, Kokonoe Tooru. We have a splendid starry sky indeed”

“……..It’s true that nights with clear stars are nice. Good evening, Chairman. Mikuni-sensei too”

After taking a light breath and calming my mind, I replied back to the intruders who greeted us.

The reason why I could immediately regain my calmness was because I predicted the possibility that this black clothed girl would appear.

Tsukimi said that it was her job when I asked her in DNL.

After hearing those words, I knew that Tsukimi was not talking about her personal choice-------which means, she had to be following the judgments from the higher ups.

That's why; I told Julie beforehand that there might be a chance that we will step into the academy's darkness depending on the conversation with Tsukimi.

That also goes for, the black clothed girl waiting for us within that darkness.

(She really came out so; it's just like what I thought)

"*giggle*……You have the face of conviction"

While placing her hand on her mouth, the chairman mad a quiet smile.

"……..So I take it as, everything was according to what Tooru predicted?"

"Exactly. Rito was part of Dawn organization in the first place and has not once been affiliated with other organizations. I was the one who ordered her to target you under the <<Newcomer battleNew blade battle>>"

Without even trying to play it off, the chairman admitted my speculation was fact.

Judging by how bold it was, I could not feel any hostility to us.

"You admitted it so easily"

"You have already reached the truth. I then decided that it's not needed to put on a pathetic farce"

"Which means, can I take this as you will answer other questions too?"

"Yes, of course"

With the side of her lips up, the black clothed girl nodded.

“Thank you very much. Then first thing first, why did you have Tsukimi target us at the <<Newcomer battleNew blade battle>>”

Even though Kouryou Academy is a mysterious garden that nurtures the unimaginable existence known as the <<Exceed>>; the chairman giving direct orders to kill her students is just beyond comprehensible.

“The <<Soul>> is something that is trained by one’s strong will-----I also think so too”

The chairman started talking from the visitor seat while looking down at us.

“A strong will-----that is none other than the will to survive. And by your thoughts, when is one able to release that will to its maximum potential?”

The time when someone wishes to live the most-----

That’s probably feeling strongly the opposite feeling of existing.

“…….it’s stepping in front of death’s door”

“Correct. Humans will wish for life to its fullest when confronted with danger, and that will cause the <<Soul>> to glow strongly……and that’s the reason why I had Rito target you all”

“It’s not like I don’t understand you but, isn’t that too violent?”

“If you died then that’s because you are worthless”

“Wha……..”

She said it so easily.

The words the girl said without breaking her smile has crossed the boundary of dignified and entered the realm of cold.

“It may be too late for this but, I praise you all for leaving the best of results. All of you produced a chemistry with your strong <<Bonds>> and brought the light of the <<Soul>> to another height”

(Chemistry…….?)

She was probably referring to the <<Duo>> when she said <<Bonds>> but, the other unfamiliar word made me twitch my eyebrows----

“The word Chemistry in Japanese translation will be chemical reaction-------it means the compatibility of people, but in this case, it will be union Kokonoe-kun”

“……..Thank you very much”

Not opening his mouth until now, Mikuni-sensei gave an explanation to me while standing beside the chairman like a shadow.

Judging by how he noticed my small change of expression under the moonlight, he probably has a full view of our actions.

“Chairman. You said that you ordered her to target us but, then why the need to attack Tora and the others?”

“I heard that he was your friend before enrolling to the academy so, I wanted to test how strong he was”

I gritted my teeth.

If that is the truth then the reason why Tora and Tatsu were attacked by Tsukimi, was because of me.

“……why us?”

I endured the anger towards the Chairman who dragged me into this and to me got dragged into this and asked her.

“In a more precise manner, I planned to give that trial to the people who possessed a firm will and was in pursue strength during the <<Newcomer battleNew blade battle>>---you and Tachibana Tomoe”

After calling that danger we faced a trial, the chairman continued with [Sadly, Tachibana Tomoe lost to you all before we could give her the trial"

"……Julie is different?"

I don't know what kind foundation she bases a "Strong will" on but, I don't think that this silver girl doesn't possess the will for further strength.

But-----

"Julie Sigtuna is not an <<Exceed>>. You should already know that fact right?"

It's true that I know the silver girl was unlike us.

But, why do I feel that the chairman is not interested in the <<El Awake>> which could be called the Original <<Exceed>>.

After slamming her with the question formed within the conversation-----

"I don't care about Julie Sigtuna who is an <<El Awake>>. However, my interest only goes no further than what kind of influence will happen if the real deal was mixed into the group"

I now understood that the black clothed girl wasn't particularly interested in the <<El Awake>>.

To the researcher of the <<Lucifer>>, her own <<ProductLucifer>> was more important to her.

Most likely, she probably reached a stalemate since the judgmental basis was clashing.

More importantly, there are many more other things I need to ask so, I changed my feeling and decided to move the conversation to the next one.

“Did you do anything else other than that?”

Maybe, someone else might have received this so called “Trial” like us behind our backs-------even though I asked her with those thoughts, the chairman swung her head sideways and that made me relieved.

“I only moved during the <<Newcomer battleNew blade battle>>. The rest just happened without my intervention”

I don’t need any further information to know what it is.

It’s definitely <<K>> and the <<Libels>>.

At the same time, it was probably due to her orders that the security guards did not show up until I beat <<K>> in the last fight.

“They moved quite well which was beyond our expectations. When I first met <<Equipment Smith>>-sama, I wouldn’t have thought that someone could reach <<IV>> this fast”

While looking at me, the black clothed girl made a bewitching devilish smile.

But, I was feeling strong rage in contrast to the chairman.

“Beyond, expectations…….?”

I felt enraged; the anger then changed my words and made me speak violently.

“Don’t joke with me!! Many people died!? Even with that, why are you still smiling!! The people who died were the <<Exceeds>> you nurtured right!!”

Many Ethanarch died in the last mission and during the seaside school.

That wasn’t all.

Judging by the conversation, it isn't hard to imagine that the same problem happened before we even enrolled and many students lost their life from that.

Even so, the black girl still smiled.

That smile that looked like she wasn't wavering or in pain from all those deaths, and her words; I just couldn't forgive her for any of that.

But-----

"……I just told you that, you are worthless if you died"

Judging by the words she replied, I could not feel waver or pain in her heart at all; forget that, there wasn't even any sense of despair.

"Why……why would you say such a thing……..is reaching the peak of the <<Exceed>> more important than human life!?"

I knew the answer.

I still shouted even though I knew.

The chairman then replied with the answer I already knew.

"Of course"

The black clothed girl placed her hand on her chest and talked with an icy tone.

"My name is Tsukumo Sakuya------the <<Diabolica>> who inherited the <<Blaze>>. Because of that, completing the <<Lucifer>> is my cause. That is the reason why am born in this world. There is nothing else that will pique my interest"

I was almost pressured.

By a 10 year girl who named herself the <<Blaze DiabolicaBlaze Witch>>.

However, I mustn't be pressured here and pull back.

"Then…….! Just gather people who have the determination to throw their life for your cause!!"

My shout echoed in the arena, and dispersed before silence returned.

With my angry voice pouring at her, the girl slowly swung her head to the left and right.

“I will admit that people with determination are strong. More so if those people who are not afraid of death. However, I don’t want people who own those will. What I want is the opposite------no matter how pathetic they may look, I want people that has the will to struggle to live”

Continuing on, the black clothed girl said something weird.

“And------This Kouryou Academy was created in order to create the ***will to live***”

“Will? Not <<Exceeds>>?”

After I asked her, the <<Diabolica>> smiled as if “Good work noticing”.

“Many old souls would say that their student life is special when asked to enter memory lane. Especially, a high school life which can be excluded out from society”

While I was feeling bewildered on what she was talking about, I kept quiet and continued listening.

“In the <<Killing Game>> before, <<Equipment Smith>>-sama called the Kouryou Academy student this: Trained students with impure substances known as a normal lifestyle”

“……that impure substance, is something that will create the will to live?”

“Yes, the reason why I gave you all a normal school life, was because you all will have stronger thirst for life”

“By thirsting to life, there is a possibility that the <<Soul>> will reach to new heights when the person is placed in an abnormal life known as war, and made to stand inside death abyss……..is that the reason why Kouryou was made?”

After nodding with satisfaction as if she was saying *Correct*, the girl turned her back to us.

“Perfect Union------a fun life with school friends, strict and tough training, fights with lives on the line; all experience you went through is to reach only at one……yes-----“

She looked up at the night sky and extended her hands up as if to grab the stars before talking.

“To the <<Absolute Duo>>”

It’s a word she said last time when we were administered the <<Lucifer>>------

And also when we enrolled into the academy.

“……..just what is the <<Absolute Duo>>?”

When I asked her, the <<Diabolica>> slowly turned around.

“The final realm that exists when the <<Power>> of the <<Soul>> is mastered----that’s all”

“……So, you gathered all of us to reach that?”

The question was silently answered with the chairman’s smile.

I didn’t need to confirm what the <<Soul>> meant; it was probably the <<Blaze>>.

Master that <<Power>>------it was impossible to imagine how high that endless goal was.

The black clothed girl gathered compatible people to reach that realm.

But, a new question was formed when I found that out.

“What are you going to do when the <<Exceed>> reaches that final realm”

If I put myself in a researcher shoes, there must be some kind of goal.

The <<Diabolica>> answered my question without any intent to hide.

But, the answer was unexpected.

She swung her head and said this.

"Nothing"

"Wha……!? What does that----"

"Humans will reach the <<Absolute Duo>> with the <<Lucifer>>-----that is everything to me"

I felt the <<Diabolica>>'s true nature from her words and felt a chill.

She's so insane that she would sacrifice everything for her goal.

That's the reason why, she pushed many lives back to the corner many time with her trial and make them stand in front of death's door.

She will continue for eternity, until the <<Exceed>> reaches the <<Absolute Duo>>.

"Isn't there another way……? Unlike an idiot like me, you're smart right? There should be other ways without sacrificing-----"

"……You have no clue what a researcher is. This is a good chance so take note. We the researchers, are sages and at the same time, fools. We believe that we will absolutely reach our goal and go through with it-----we are such egoists"

The words she said; was none other than saying that she would not change the thought that she would throw away as many lives for her goal.

"……..i have no intentions to deny your goal. Honestly, it's interesting to see if i can really master the strength. But, that's only if no one is sacrificed! That's why I will never acknowledge your method!!"

"*giggle*…….So, what happens if you don't acknowledge this?"

She's probably enjoying my reaction.

While smiling, the girl who had her method denied, asked me.

That's why I told her my determination.

"I will protect everyone! I will use the <<Power>> you gave me to protect them from you!!"

"Now that's ironic……..Julie Sigtuna. Your <<Duo>> is saying that you know?"

The chairman moved her sights to Julie as if she thought that Julie had something to say.

"I also feel the same way as him. I am thankful that I can now control the <<Power>> of the <<El Awake>> which I could not handle but, this and that is a different story"

Julie also feels the same way.

After losing people precious to us, we will never acknowledge the methods of the black clothed girl who view are human life lightly.

"*Giggle*, is that so. Just as expected from the <<Duo>> who escaped death together. However, we have many more pawns that surpass you two. Adding on, whenever the trial begins-----and end, is based on my mood. Even so, can you say that you will protect them?"

The black clothed girl, Mikuni-sensei, Tsukimi and Julie were paying attention to me while I said the <<word that carried strength.

"<<Blaze>>"

"----------!!"

Everyone gasped except the chairman.

"It's okay, Mikuni"

<<Diabolica>> stopped her bodyguard from covering her.

At the same time, I grabbed the <<Azure Flame>> I created----and manifested the <<Blaze>>.

“Tooru…….”

“It’s okay, Julie. I am not going to fight…….i heard the <<Soul>> must be needed when making a trade with the devil”

“What are you doing?”

The black clothed girl standing in my view-------Tsukumo Sakuya was wearing a gothic dress which was half absorbed in the darkness and looked like a devil.

I feel that way even more, now that I know the girl does not even feel madness.

It’s because I am dealing with such a person that I needed the weapon manifested by the <<Soul>>----the <<Blaze>>.

“Chairman……no, <<Blaze diabolica>>-----Tsukumo Sakuya.

I took a deep breath before announcing.

“Make---a contract with me”

“……..what kind of contract?”

Even though she replied that, my words were probably within her predictions.

Her giggling appearance as if she was happy from the bottom of her heart, shows that.

But, I didn’t care and continued.

“I will take on all of your trials! That’s why, stop giving the trials to people who have no will for it!!”

"……..do you know what your words meant--------you sound like you know what you are talking about huh, Kokonoe Tooru"

"Of course"

"The contract will be reconsidered if you die you know?"

"I------vow that I will not die. I will live and protect everyone……!!"

"Of course, we will revoke it if we decide that you don't have the potential to do so"

"I don't mind. I won't let you decide that anyway"

"Then……..are you saying that you will reach it-----to the <<Absolute Duo>>?"

The black clothed girl made a bewitching smile while I nodded.

If I am going to protect everyone, I have to steel myself up to overcome all the trails the <<Diabolica>> assign.

"I promise, on this <<Shield>>!"

I placed my manifested <<Soul>> on my chest and shouted.

"I will reach it-----to the <<Absolute Duo>>……!"

The <<Diabolica>> smiled as if she gained a fun toy after hearing my announcement.

The silver girl continued on after me towards the black clothed girl who was smiling like the devil.

"I will fight too. I promised him that I will continue to be his <<Duo>>"

"…….Julie Sigtuna. Our plan won't end even if you, the <<El Awake>> reach there"

"Ja---. I know. But, it will end if Tooru the <<Exceed>> reaches there. If that's the case then, I will continue protecting his back until then"

“You are free to do so. Now that’s a <<Duo>>. *Giggle*, *Giggle giggle*……..”

After hearing Julie’s announcement, the <<Blaze Diabolica>>------ Tsukumo Sakuya nodded before making a mysterious smile.

The contract was formed.

With this, everyone and the Ethanarch, will not go through the trials as long as the contract with me lives.

After leaving the arena, I apologized to Julie.

“Julie, sorry to put you through this. I can’t think of any other way…….”

“Nai, Please don’t worry”

Even though I apologized to the silver girl who chose to take on the trials with me, she swung her head.

“I said this just now that I feel the same way as you”

“I see……Sorr----no, thanks, Julie”

“Ja—“

After thanking her, my trustworthy <<Duo>> made a big nod.

We stopped our legs when we almost reached the dorm.

We noticed the girl with Yellow Topazblonde hair leaning against the fence around the dorm.

“Lilith…….”

“Welcome back, Tooru”

Apparently she noticed us too so, she looked over here and called my name.

A different atmosphere could be felt around her.

“You touched it huh”

“……..Yeah”

That line says it all so I agreed.

Of course, it was regarding the school’s dark side.

“So Lilith knew?”

“Yes, I knew. Her goal, method, just everything”

The gold girl did not even try to make it vague and nodded clearly.

But, those were within my expectations.

She’s the daughter of the Bristol company president which is deeply connected to Dawn organization; an <<Exceed>> who owns the <<Rifle>>-the <<Unrivaled Blaze>>-----and because of that, she has the position of <<Exception>> which gives her access to the academy’s secret.

Adding on, she’s been acquainted with the chairman since way back so, summing all up, it’s harder to believe that she does not know about the dark side.

“You did not tell us----no, you can’t tell us even with your status huh?”

“Both. I have my goal. That’s why I kept quiet”

“……I see. Well-----“

I walked towards the dorm and lightly pat Lilith’s head when I crossed by her.

“Don’t sweat it”

“Eh…….?”

Lilith’s Sapphire blueblue gemstone eyes opened wide for an instant and immediately fell into dismay.

“W-wait there, what do you mean by don’t sweat it, Tooru!? There’s no way that I have nothing to say or you have nothing to ask right……..!? Or are you saying that you had nothing you didn’t like!?”

“I will be lying if I said I had nothing I didn’t like”

I stopped my legs and turned around before making a wry smile while telling her my real thoughts.

“But Lilith, you had your own situation you couldn’t talk about. Most likely, you still can’t say it even now----right?”

“That’s……..”

Her downward casted eyes were the answer.

“I have only one question. Just tell me if you can’t answer, I am okay with that. Lilith, do you acknowledge the chairman’s methods?”

After hearing that question, she glared at me and trembled with anger.

“There’s no way I would acknowledge that”

“……that’s more than enough. Okay, let’s go in, it’s almost curfew”

“Tooru, is that really enough? I-----“

I swung my head to interrupt Lilith’s sentence.

“I have problems with the things you can’t say even with your status but, I will still believe in you, Lilith. What can I believe if I can’t even trust the comrade who fought side by side with me”

“Tooru……”

The face of the gold girl, had a mix of troubled and yet happy expression on it.

“So, I’ll be counting on you like always, Lilith. Come to me anytime if you have any problems”

After saying that, I intentionally ended the conversation and headed to the dorm while Julie followed behind.

Judging how she listened to the flow of the conversation without bringing herself into the story, Julie probably left every conversation regarding the chairman incident to me.

And as for the gold girl; just when I placed my hands on the dorm door-----

“Hnn, mou. We aren’t comrades but lovers you know, Tooru!”

Just when I thought light footsteps came from behind, Lilith jumped into my chest when I turned around.

But, Julie pulled Lilith off me----

“Nai, you’re not”

And the usual familiar glaring began.

I laughed tiredly while looking at them go at it.

Part 2

“*Giggle*, *Giggle giggle*……”

The secret meeting ended; while looking at them leave, Tsukumo Sakuya giggled.

That’s because everything was according to plan------or this could be described as going above than expected.

(Unfortunately, Kokonoe Tooru was the only one here. If Tachibana Tomoe came along then it would have been the best flow)

After Sakuya quietly continued her thoughts, Tsukimi Rito beside her made a big yawn.

“Okay then……..looks like most of it went according to your plan so I’ll be heading back to sleep since I am sleepy”

After another yawn, Rito waved farewell and left.

“……she looks quite unhappy”

Mikuni mumbled while looking at Tsukimi leaving.

Rito’s a moody person so it’s hard to read her thoughts but, her attitude was completely understood by them since they were with her for several years.

“It can’t be helped. Rito probably didn’t like her favorite boy dancing on the palm of my hands. But-----that’s a good trend”

It might be because she took Tooru and the group under her supervision; Rito changed.

After Sakuya closed her eyes, she recalled back Rito from last year.

It’s a big difference from the Rito that Tooru and the group knows of now.

After slowly opening her eyes, Sakuya looked up to the moon.

“You’re one interesting boy, <<Irregular>>----Kokonoe Tooru. You made a deep <<Bond>> with the <<El Awake>>, stimulated the <<Exception>>’s <<Soul>>, and lighted up the eyes of a person that had no signs of any characteristics----“

In Sakuya’s mind; Julie, Lilith and Miyabi floated and lastly Rito.

“Even that Rito changed after coming in contact with you……..you really are the Irregularunknown entity. *Giggle*, *giggle giggle*…….”

The <<Diabolica>>’s soft laugh echoed in the moonlight.

While thinking that she won’t be looking away from Tooru.

While thinking that “As expected from the person who has a connection with him”.

Chapter 6 『I Will Give You The <<Fang>>』

Part 1

“What kind of person was Otoha-san like?”

Julie asked that question right after the train heading to Fujisawa departed.

On the last Saturday of August-----

Julie and Tora were accompanying me to visit Otoha’s grave.

It’s quite late from the planned O-bon but, I think Otoha will forgive us since many many things happened.

“Otoha huh. Let’s see……..i told you this before but, she would always follow me from behind. She has a quiet personality, and even though she doesn’t talk much in front of others, she would get noisy when it comes to me-----“

“Fuun, that’s because you keep performing acts that would worry her”

“……”

Even though Tora visits us once or twice every month, he has been with us for many years so that’s why I interrupted in with a bitter face.

"From my own words, she's a quiet one but, she's good in catching details, and is good in nature……..she's a little too caring though"

"Hahah. She would half-forcefully treat your wounds after all"

Since we were the same age and had the same strength level, we would always fight over who is stronger and could not avoid injuries.

After saying that with that memory in mind, Tora made a bitter face this time.

"Guh. Even though I tell her that the wound isn't that serious, she would look at me with those teary eyes. How the heck can I refuse…….wait, you get more injured than me. Don't make it sound like I am the only one getting injured for your own convenience"

While causing a fuss------(Tora was the one mainly causing it)-----we continued talking about Otoha.

"Her hair length reached her hips, and around here----"

I pointed to my temple.

"She would braid her hair at one point here. Also-----this might sound biased but, I think she's cute. Especially her smile"

"Fuun, you don't have to be biased, she's beautiful unlike you. I told you just now before that she's good in natured so she's quite popular in the dojo I went to"

I felt great when Tora said that.

It's a happy feeling that a family member is being praised.

"She sounds like a good girl"

"Yeah, I think of her as my sister"

"…….Tora, no matter how charming Otoha is, I think having a 12 year old as your love interest is bad"

"Don't just think of Otoha's age from 2 years ago! I am 14 at that time!! And, I said I thought of her as a sister originally!!"

I teased Tora after feeling better and a good retort flew back as expected.

Otoha's story continued on.

But-----***he*** never came up once, even his name wasn't.

It's natural for me but, Tora did not say it too.

With that day as the start, his whereabouts were lost but, he's publically announced as deceased from the fire.

Where is he, after he disappeared into the flames……..

Soon, we got off the train and what we were waiting for was-----

"I am glad that you are healthy and lively, young master. Kokonoe-sama too"

A black luster high-class car was stopped in front of us and a properly attired old man lowered his head to us.

"It has been a while, Terao-san"

"Eeei, I told you many times to stop calling me young master, Terao!"

"---------?"

Julie looked confused when she heard the conversation we were talking with the old man.

We explained to her that Terao serve as a butler in Tora's house and he would be sending us to the cemetery from the station today.

Actually, Tora came from a wealthy family; so much that it's hard to understand why he would pick his future in a technique training school.

He says that this path suits him but, he used to go to a famous private school with a tough middle exam during middle school so, I could only imagine that he messed up his pedigree; leaving his attitude aside though.

After Julie and Terao exchanged greetings, we got on the car and left the station.

And after the car wiggled around less than 20 minutes------

We reached the cemetery Otoha and the others were sleeping at.

We got of the car, and entered park with the cleaning tools Terao-san prepared for us.

After reaching the tombstone with Kokonoe family grave written on it, I started cleaning with them.

Only the cries of cicadas could be heard in this cemetery which was only populated by us.

After a while------we placed the offering flowers now that it's quite clean and placed the incensed stick before praying.

(Otoha, sorry for being late……..)

First off, I closed my eyes to apologize, and reported the events that happened in this half-year in my mind.

How I met the silver girl, unexpectedly meeting Tora, and many other things.

And also-----I told her I gained <<Power>>.

I stood up after I finished reporting.

(You're probably angry, Otoha. You will definitely tell me to protect others if I gained <<Power>>……..but, but i……)

I thought of Otoha who had her clock stopped on that day.

My quiet, caring and noisy sister.

That shy face she shows when I pat her head.

The smile I couldn't protect.

That's why I won't forgive him.

My best friend who took everything precious from me-Otoha"

(I will kill him! I will definitely……..!)

I have the wish to protect others.

I have another me that wish for his death.

Including the wish I have with Julie; I am filled with contradictions.

"Sorry, it's because of me that you had to come so late"

When it was starting to get dark, we left the tomb and were heading to the parking lot before Tora said that during the trip.

On the Sunday--------the day before we went to DNL; Tora said that he had matter he must attend so we should change the memorial to today, apparently that's haunting him now.

"1 week isn't a big deal. Rather, I think Otoha is happy that you came"

"……..i see. I'm glad if that's so"

Tora made a light smile within his apologetic expression.

"Thanks, Tora. I am happy too. Also, thank you Julie, for coming"

"Ja--. I'm so glad that I could do a proper greeting"

At the entrance of the cemetery, we lowered our heads to another visitor when we were passing through and reached the parking lot before I talked to Tora.

"……Tora. What are you going to do now"

"I know. You're going to your house right? Sorry but, I have to show up in my house so I can't stop by"

"About that-----"

I am going to go to my empty house to clean and return back to the academy----that's my plan.

But, I swung my head.

"Sorry. I will walk from here. It's not far from my house"

"……Fuun, it's normal to want to look around your hometown after so long. There's no need to feel sorry"

After saying "See you at night", Tora rode the car and left.

"Julie, sorry to make you follow"

"Nai. I love walking"

"Ahm no…….well, about that……"

"-------?"

Julie's bell *Chirin* rang when she tilted her small head when I replied back indecisively.

"There's someone----I want to talk to"

It's someone Tora does not know, and to avoid the worst case scenario, I made sure that they won't meet.

For that; I have to separate from him; I do feel bad for him though.

"Who is that person?"

To answer Julie's question, I looked towards the car stopped at a corner of the parking lot.

It wasn't there when we reached the cemetery; the car was more luxurious than the one Tora's family has.

"……..i didn't think you're such a person to have such an amazing ride"

"It's not mine, you damn kid"

The voice came from the cemetery entrance.

The person who replied, was the visitor who we passed by just now----a big statured man.

Pale dark sun burned skin, and this big man who called me a damn kid, was definitely my acquaintance.

"Seriously, I thought you forgotten my face since you did not talk to me"

"There's no way I could finish such an overly special person like you, Old man"

"It's Ouza-san, you kid"

"If you're going to say that, then I have the name Kokonoe Tooru too, Old man Ouza"

We glared at each other--------and both smiled.

"Wahaha. You're still a shit spouting brat like usual huh. Well, glad to see you happy and well, kid"

"You too old man. I thought you died a dog's death a long time ago"

After hearing my reply, Ouza-san laughed loudly while straddling closer------

He launched his back hand.

“Tooru!!”

The attack launched by the man who has a body of muscle, *Bachii* made a loud echo.

The attack----did not connect.

I immediately blocked it with one hand.

“It’s okay, Julie. This person isn’t bad but, he is bad with people”

If it was the me 1 year ago, forget even blocking, I would get blasted away with that one handed heavy attack; while stopping him, I told the silver girl.

“Those are harsh words…….well leaving that aside, looks like you improved a little huh”

“Haha, honestly, I am happy you say that”

I smiled again and looked at him.

“……Tooru, is that person you are acquainted with?”

Looking at this by the sidelines; this exchange would seem weird. Julie looked troubled after being left out of the group for the second time today.

“Yeah. This person is called Ouza and is the martial arts assistant instructor I learned under before------

I let go of his fist and continued my words.

“Someone who knows about Otoha’s last moment”

2 years ago-----

“O…….nii-cha……..”

Within my arms, Otoha looked painful------she was slowly dying, and weakly called my name.

“……..”

Otoha’s mouth moved.

But, I couldn’t hear her words.

The sound was erased by the sparks caused by the flames or she has already lost the strength to talk; either way, I don’t know.

But, I know what she was talking about.

[Are you injured?] Otoha asked.

“Yeah, yeah, yeah……..! I am okay, thanks to you…….!”

I nodded, and nodded and nodded again.

In order to show Otoha that I am not injured at all, I nodded many times.

Otoha’s mouth moved again.

[I am so glad]

After Otoha said that with a smile---she died.

“Oto-ha……..? Otoha, Otoha, Otohaaaaaaaaaaa……..!!”

Unable to swallow the reality in front of me, I continuously called Otoha out.

Over, and over again-----

But, Otoha did not open her eyes again.

Normally, Otoha would immediately respond to my calls but she did not open her mouth.

Each time I called her out, each time I shake her shoulders; like a stain spreading out, those actions were making my heart accept the reality happening in front of me.

That goes for the reality that the person who took Otoha's life was my childhood friend, and my best friend too.

"Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhhh!!"

My heart was being crushed by anger, hatred and despair but, I still shouted my best friend's name.

But, he looked at me with those dark eyes without any word------

After the moment that felt like an eternity passed, he turned away.

He then walked into the hell fire without hesitation and looked behind once more.

"Good bye, Tooru……..until the day, a new chapter begins"

Immediately, the dojo started to collapse with loud crashes-----

I lost consciousness.

"……..hey there, kid. Looks like you're awake"

When I opened my eyes, a big man with a pale dark skin and the bright blue sky entered my view.

"Who are you……? Also where is------what was i……"

After raising my body with my hazy mind, I was on top a lawn. When I looked around, familiar scenes entered my view and it made me notice where I was.

The place I am at right now, as the big park near the dojo.

I can see the green hill filled with trees which holds the Ittouryuu dojo I attend to from this park.

That's why I would naturally move my sights to the hill but----

I noticed something odd.

Black smoke was rising from the hill.

"What is……?"

A fire------

When those letters scratched my mind, my memories came back with a spark.

"-------!! Otohaaa!!"

I stood up and was about to run off but, the big man grabbed my arm.

"Let go! Otoha is still inside there!!"

"Is that Otoha this girl here?"

The big man showed a girl inside his big bulky arms.

Inside his arms, the girl sleeping without any movements was definitely my sister, Otoha.

But-------I know that those eyes will never open again.

Otoha's soul is no longer in this world------

I know the person who severed her life, was the young man I thought was my best friend.

After crying so much that it started to dry up, I asked the big man with pale dark skin who he was.

The man named himself Ouza, and told me that he was a person that studied the Ittouryuu like me.

“Well, I was probably kicked out a long time ago”

10 years ago, Ouza-san said he left the dojo to seek a strength that the Ittouryuu dojo doesn’t have before making a wry smile.

But, I knew his name.

His name was on the wooden name lists of the student board but, the name Ouza-san was----placed on a position telling others that he is an assistant instructor.

The big man then made a complex expression before saying [I see…….].

Not long later, Ouza-san stared at the hill fuming with black smoke while mumbling downheartedly.

“Seriously, is this guidance from the heavens……..”

“Heaven guidance…….? That!? That’s done by a person, by him!”

“A human huh…….you’re right……sorry there, kid……..if I showed up a little earlier, I might have saved this girl at least……”

“You aren’t responsible for any of this……”

I swung my head, and said the words that person said in the flames to blame myself in failing to protect Otoha.

“Everything is his fault, No-------***it’s because I was weak that Otoha was killed***”

“……what are you going to do from now on?”

To answer Ouza-san's question, I mixed the emotions of anger and hatred and-------spouted it out as a curse named a vow.

"I-----will become strong. I will become stronger and kill him…..! I will definitely kill him!!"

The disaster was reported as misconduct of fire in the dojo and his name was listed in the deceased.

Otoha's death was treated as carbon monoxide poisoning, and the sword wound at her back was not pointed out at all.

Both of it was probably manipulated by Ouza-san but, I don't know the details.

On the day, the small Otoha, turned even smaller[3], Ouza-san left [This is all I can do] before disappearing-------

2 months passed since then.

On a certain day, I reunited with Ouza-san who was in an old temple located in the mountains in the north east region.

I heard this when we separated so, I went around the region of the temple where Ouza-san said that he was living now, to meet him.

"Make me stronger"

"Just when I thought we haven't met for a long time……"

"Please, Ouza-san! You're strong right!? Please make me stronger! I want to become stronger!!"

"In order to kill ***that*** huh……"

I nodded when I heard Ouza-san's words.

[3] Turned to ashes I guess

I want to become stronger as fast as possible.

But, only by the things my master-------(an instructor of the ittouryou and his grandfather)----taught me; forget even catching up to him I know that I could not even touch him like this.

That's why, I went to Ouza-san who knew about the situation.

"Go back. I saw that for an instant but, it's not something you can handle"

After a flat reply, he turned away from me.

No matter how many times I asked him, no matter how much I lowered my head, the answer did not change but, I did not leave the old temple and continued staying there.

Starting on the next day, I started punching a giant tree at the corner of the temple.

Skin turned, blood spilled and wound's covered with cloth, I continued punching while enduring the pain.

I would eat and at the same time rest when I could no longer raise my arms from the fatigue and the pain turned to numbness; and after that, I would turn back to the giant tree----that was my life.

There was no one else in the temple other than Ouza-san; he would drink sake, read books, watch TV, take after noon; taking on a self-indulged lifestyle and would not talk to me at all.

After going through such a lifestyle for 5 days-----I collapsed.

"Did you get a little stronger?"

I regained consciousness, and Ouza-san asked me for the first time.

I could not answer that question.

What I understand, was the pain on my fist and foot, and also the fatigue on my whole body.

“Well that’s about it. Even though you overworked, only a brat like you will come up with the idea that you can get stronger by swinging your fist like a fool”

“Sorry for being a brat! But, he made by swinging thousands of time! If that’s it then even i……!!”

Just like my words, he would continuously swing his sword in his Ittouryuu training until he reaches the thousand digits.

I heard that he finally reached Godspeed after going through that.

He achieved that in 2 years of tough training.

But, my current self could not even chase up to him of that time.

That’s why I thought that I must reach that realm first but----

“I see……It’s because you saw a 100% success huh. What’s more, since it’s what your enemy achieved, it can’t be helped that you think you can do it too”

While scratching his unshaven face, Ouza-san sighed.

“It’s true, that there are cases where people become stronger after overworking. But, it’s a normal outcome that the body will collapse half-way……more importantly, you should know the best that ***thing*** isn’t normal”

“I know, he was called a genius. I could not even compare to his feet. Even though I have to reach such a person, even though I won’t be able to avenge Otoha if I don’t do that…….Just what the hell should I do!!”

I clenched my fist and gritted my teeth in regret.

Ouza-san quietly told me this while looking at me.

“There are more methods to become stronger than 1”

That sentence had a huge impact to me.

There are many ways to become stronger and I should find the one that suits me and would make me stronger. Ouza-san also continued with----(You’re not even worth the time since you’re basics still isn’t there).

“Also, another problem before that is, to eat your meals properly and rest when you need to. I won’t help you again if you collapse again”

Ouza-san left the room and I continued thinking about the conversation we had until I fell asleep again.

(There are more methods to become stronger huh……)

If that’s the case, just what kind of method will make me stronger.

On the next day, I ended up meeting up with Ouza-san and said this.

“I’ll try going through the moves my master taught me. On top of that, I think of finding a the method to becoming stronger that matches me, like what you said”

“Kuku, do whatever you like. But let me tell you this first, I have no intentions to teach you any moves”

“I understand, old man”

“Haha. Good thing you know----wait, what the hell is with the Old man thing!?”

“You have no intentions to teach me any moves right? Then, how can I call you Ouza-san”

I laughed at Ouza-san and ran outside.

“Oh man, what a brat……”

Like that; I started running according to what my master taught me before. It's ideal to train my legs on the bumpy hill and a trip to the bottom completely exhausts me.

After running, I will swing my fist while recalling back what my master taught me. I would unwantedly recall back swinging my fist with everyone and it pains me a little.

During breaks, I was made to eat or sent out to buy sake or split firewood for the baths; sometimes he would forcefully bring me fishing, saying that it's important to let the body and mind rest.

As time passed, a few months passed by.

On a certain day the mountain was covered in snow and was at its peak of coldness-------

"Brat. Your feeling of becoming stronger hasn't changed right?"

Ouza-san was drinking sake as usual when suddenly he strike that conversation.

"Don't ask the obvious"

"……I see. Then, I'll teach you reality. The harshness of reality that is"

He finished the sake bottle in a gulp and told me.

"You have no talent"

Apparently, he noticed that after looking at my trainings.

Although my athletic abilities are above average, my martial arts talents-------Rather, my sense, was apparently lacking.

"I----won't reach him like this……..?"

"You can call ***that*** a monster. It's impossible for you"

I could see Ouza-san was not lying from his expression.

These few months were enough for me to know that he wasn't some normal guy.

That's why, his words were heavy.

It's not something simple like the harshness of reality.

It's a wall of despair.

I was captured by the feeling of falling into hell.

A painful silence came by and not long later-------

"But even so-----"

I clenched my trembling fist and slammed it to the ground.

"But I will still do it……..! I, it's because I vowed!!"

Within the room filled with silence again, I stared straight at Ouza-san.

I stared with the intentions of destroying the wall between me and him regardless how hopeless it might be.

After a while-----

"……Look at this"

Ouza-san showed me a paper while saying that------it's an academy guide.

"Kouryou Academy…….?"

I want to become stronger as fast as possible.

Why would he ask me to go to school when I wished for that-------even though I am not going to school now in the first place.

Maybe my mind was obvious, he might have thought about that from the beginning.

“You can gain <<Power>> if you go here……..it’s your choice if you want to go though”

“<<Power>>…….? What do you mean, Old man!?”

I was told here.

About the existence of a weird school which is known to be a technique training school.

Even the fact that I will gain the <<Power>> that overcomes human limits, if you enroll to Kouryou Academy.

“Although, you apparently need to be an <<Adept>> to enroll into this Kouryou Academy it seems. What’s more, an innate trait that only the percentage of 1 over a 1000 people has”

“If I am refused then I’ll find another way……..there are more methods to become stronger than 1”

“Kuku, you can make a good face better now huh”

Ouza-san shook his shoulders a bit before, taking a gulp.

“Okay, I’ve said what I wanted to say. Now then------we will part ways tonight, brat”

“-------!?”

“I am going on a trip again. I won’t be coming back here again”

He would disappear now and won’t come back after a few days or a week but, I never would have thought that he would say that he will never come back here again.

“I see……..”

I squeezed those words out.

The reason why my heart was going up and down was because of loneliness.

Just like what Ouza-san said, he did not teach me any skills in this few months I spent my time here but, he had conversations with me. Most of the conversations were useless and; i noticed later on that he was sometimes concerned about my health.

And within those days; the figure of my deceased father started piling onto him before I knew it and I would treat him accordingly.

Even though there was nothing similar between them, but regardless.

“Okay then……..before I leave----I guess I’ll give you a parting gift”

“Parting gift.....?”

Ouza-san stood up in front of me while I was tilting my head.

The big man with pale dark skin said “Follow me” before going outside and I followed him.

We headed to the back of the temple------and stood in front of a giant rock which easily crosses 10 meter.

“Take a good look, brat. Now-----“

Ouza-san clenched his fist and pulled it back like firing a bow-----taking on a stance.

“I will give you the <<Fang>>”

I told Julie about the events that ***occurred after Otoha’s death in the fire***, about how I was taken care of by Ouza-san for a while and also that he taught me <<MjolnirThunder god’s strike>> as a parting gift.

The reason why I purposely told her was to make Ouza-san think that ***Julie doesn't know*** about the fact that I was an <<Avenger>>.

A normal person would want revenge-------- and what's more, it's someone who vowed to take the life of his enemy; it's just insane for anyone to take action with such a person. This is to guard against asking her why she would come to think that way.

I don't know if my intentions were fully sent to her but, Julie wasn't particularly pointing it out.

After telling Julie everything, she looked at Ouza-san's muscle mass before nodding.

"So <<MjolnirThunder god's strike>> is from this person……I can agree"

I recalled back the time I told Julie that her small body will break if she uses <<MjolnirThunder god's strike>>.

"Mjol…….what's that?"

After telling him, Julie named that move, Ouza-san laughed loudly.

"Wahaha. To think the Ittouryuu final move would be called that way. But-----judging by how this Ojou-chan knowing that skill, it looks like you can use it now"

"Well, it took over 1 year though"

Although it was assembled during the training I had every day since the day he taught me, it was only a month before I enrolled to Kouryou Academy that I could use it.

"No no, it's amazing you could achieve it. Normally you'd give up half-way through. You probably worked hard to cover your lack of talent. That's one tear jerking story there, oi" He was hitting my back while saying that.

"By the way, how about introducing that Ojou-chan already. Your relationship should be a serious one for you to bring her to your sister's grave visit, hnn?"

"Stop hitting me, it hurts. Also, my relationship with Julie isn't what you think"

It's going to be annoying if he remained misunderstood so, I gave him a short explanation about the <<Duo>>.

"That's boring……did this brat throw his desires"

Even though he was grumbling while scratching his head; honestly, mind your own business.

"But well, it's been 1 and a half year since we part……..and I was about to ask you about how strong you got after that but------"

Ouza-san pointed his palm at me.

"This way is much faster for our case…..right?"

"Yeah, you are"

I nodded and took a stance.

"Tooru……"

Julie looked worriedly at me when I took a Seikentsuki stance.

But, she was worried about Ouza-san, not me.

"It's okay. The old man Ouza will be alright even if he gets hit by the ***current me***-----he's a monster after all"

The <<MjolnirThunder god's strike>> Ouza-san showed me had the same power of my current self.

That is why I don't think this person will suffer any injuries if I attack him.

“Houuu that sentence sounds like you have quite some confidence there, brat”

After I slightly smiled, I silently took a deep breath before------

Thrusting my fist outwards with my spirit.

Immediately, *Baaam* an explosion occurred.

“Kuku, enough. Know I have a clear view on how amazing the <<Lucifer>> is. Now I feel like fighting someone who is has a higher <<Level>> than you”

Ouza-san smiled fearlessly while easily blocking my Seikentsuki which has my body weight put into it.

I shrugged my shoulders in response to this big man.

“Seriously, you’re really a monster……”

But-----

The monster standing in front of me, called him a monster.

Even though it’s not the <<MjolnirThunder god’s strike>>, the Ouza-san who blocked my full power called him that.

This none other means that I have to become a lot stronger than now.

Yes, until the day I meet him--------

“You looked like you were having fun just now, Tooru”

“I see……..?”

“Ja----“

We parted from Ouza-san and were on our way to my house when Julie started the conversation.

“Fun huh…….that might be true”

I agreed with Julie even though I was making a wry smile.

Just like how Julie sees her father in me, I was also looking at that person like my father.

That’s why, I felt happy seeing him after so long.

Incidentally, it’s only natural that I would keep looking at Ouza-san as a father figure a secret. There’s no way I could tell him and he would only present me with a teasing if he finds out anyways.

Leaving that aside, it is because I have such feelings that I understand why Julie would see me as a father figure and------I understand how lonely it is.

…….because of that, I was unable to refuse sleeping together when she asked the first time and she would keep pushing for it later after.

“Is that so. That’s great but-------it feels kind of complicated”

Julie’s expression clouded for an instant.

“Eh? Why?”

“……it’s a secret so I’ll have sleeping together tonight as repayment”

This topic ended with that final unknown reply.

After that, we started talking about something else while walking.

The cries of the evening cicada when the sun was going down, signifies the end of summer.

Not long later-------I stopped at a certain T junction.

“Tooru……..?”

I would reach home if I keep going straight from the right turn but, on the opposite side…….

"……Julie, Sorry. There's a place I want to stop by for a while"

After saying that while staring at the hill, Julie nodded silently.

I thanked Julie and I headed to the place where it all started.

".…….it's so quiet"

From the entrance which has a signboard showing "Entry prohibited", we entered the zone and continued moving up the hill until we could no longer hear the evening cicadas.

No, the evening cicada's wasn't the only one.

Our surroundings were so quiet as if the space here was separated from the outside world.

The word "Sudden silence" was probably meant for this scenario.

Maybe it's from the silence or it might be from my last memories; it feels harder to breath as I step forward.

Soon-----the road ended and we reached an open space.

Until that day from 2 years ago, the Ittouryou Dojo used to exist here on this hill.

There were no traces of it and turned into a lonely desolated area.

The sunset made the sky look red and emphasized the lonely atmosphere even more.

I gasped when I saw the scene.

That's because, the red filled world reminded me of the dojo wrapped in flames.

That's because, I saw a lingering darkness at the starting spot which looked like a replay of that memory.

The darkness slowly turned around----and smiled.

“Long time no see, Tooru”

That darkness’s name was Narukami Sakaki.

Formerly my best friend------and my target for Otoha’s death was there.

Apparently the ***someday***, was today-----

Part 2

“Seriously, this is so ironic……”

When Tooru and Julie could not be seen anymore, Ouza-san cracked his neck.

“Okay then--------how long to you plan on peeking? Come on out already or else I’ll grab your neck and drag you out-----<<Judges>>”

“Je suis désoléMy apologies”

The luxurious car parked in the area opened its window and an apology could be heard from inside.

A young man could be seen inside the car from the window------what’s more, he was wearing a weird outfit which was a white military uniform.

“I didn’t want to spoil the reunion with your ElöveBeloved Disciple------<<Grave Phantom>>”

The young man who called Ouza-san by his <<Sepher Name>> which signifies a pillar of the <<Rein>>-----called <<Tempest Judges>> made a silent smile.

“You probably said that while knowing but, that brat isn’t my disciple. He’s so weak so I gave him the <<Fang>> to survive”

“Fufu, I’ll leave it at that……nonetheless, I took this opportunity to watch a rare scene. I never would have thought that you would look so happy”

Even though Ouza noticed his existence but ignored him; he thought that he was seen by someone annoying while taking out cigarettes from his pocket and lighted it up.

“It’s obvious I would show a different face if you compare him to you. In the first place, if you’re going to talk about rarity, you moving in a carthat is much more rare”

“My normal transport is a carthis. You know that the have conditions right?”

The TeleporterGate <<Tempest Judges>> used during the <<Rein Conference>> is useful but, there are obviously inconvenience too. The most problematic one is that the targeted space must be marked beforehand to teleport.

“By the way, I have one question for you”

After exhaling a big puff of smoke, Ouza glared at the young man.

“Why did you get rid of the old man. I think he is still useful for the organization right?”

When Ouza asked him about the murder of <<Equipment Smith>>, <<Judges>> slightly raised his smile and replied back.

“Fufu, it’s just as what you said just now”

“Me?”

“Having him gone is my will as a <<Rein>>. Although, as a top brass of the organization, I wanted him to create more <<Power>> for the future though”

Even though he wished for life, he brought death upon him------

Those thoughts contradict each other but, to the military clothed young man, they are not fake wills.

It’s solely based on the view of his status-------and that his replacing mask had a different view.

For this case, the military clothed young man prioritized his face as a <<Rein>>.

That’s why, <<Tempest Judges>> suggested the <<Killing Game>> during the <<Rein Conference>> even though it opposes the organization top brass’s warnings.

"……Your personality sucks as usual"

Ouza spat out the cigarette in his mouth when he heard <<Judges>>'s reply.

"So, what business do you have today? It should be quite the reason for you to purposely show up right?"

"Non non. I am just here for a pick-up. I coincidentally met up with you when I was waiting for the pick-up-----"

"…….Pick up?"

Ouza interrupted the young man's words.

He reacted not because of the bragging word "Coincidence" but rather, the other part.

"***For whom***, would a bigshot like you do this for……?"

"Of course-----"

<<Tempest Judges>> made a cool smile half-way through his words before telling him.

"It's for ***him***, <<Phantom>>"

Chapter 7 『The Stage Of The Abyss』

Part 1

"They died because they were weak"

The words spoken on that summer day has not once faded in my memories.

Otoha's disappearing warmth, the dojo covered in hellfire, his-----Narukami Sakaki's face, voice, eyes; everything.

"The red sunset looks like blood or fire------it's like a replay of that day, Tooru"

The crimson world created with the sky burned by the evening sun.

Just like his words, Sakaki smiled as if to replay the scene from 2 years ago.

"Ah….aa-aah…….ah…….Sa-kaki……"

Over and over and over again--------the hopeless memories I have seen countless of times within this 2 years turned into reality.

The enemy that I have been chasing after this whole time.

Those unforgettable dark eyes.

Just like that day, the young man was holding his sheathed sword and was standing in this crimson world; this is definitely-------

"Sakakiiiiiiiiiiiiii-------!!"

Whether I was in full understanding or not, I shouted while my view was turning white from the anger and hatred.

The ugly black flames in my heart rampaged-------turned into killing intent towards Sakaki and devoured my mind.

"U-ah……ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh-----!!"

"Tooru!?"

When those killing intent caused me to roar, the girl standing beside me, the contract with the director---the promise that I would protect everyone in my class, all disappeared in my mind.

"Oaahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!!"

I roared like a beast and jumped at him without any hesitation.

The moment my punch landed on the darkness-Sakaki, his figure disappeared like the heat haze.

“We haven’t seen each other for so long but this is quite the introduction, Tooru”

His voice came from behind.

Even though it’s nostalgic, his soft voice was unpleasant.

“Shut up!!”

I swung my clenched fist at the same time I turned around-----but, it’s still a miss.

I saw through it this time but-----he still dodged it with a millimeter difference.

My movements did not stop there; I continued launching punches and kicks.

But, it won’t connect.

Just like the first attack, it felt like I was hallucinating as if I was fighting with the heat haze.

It’s not like Sakaki was displaying quick moves and rather, it’s me that was slower.

I know this move.

These are dodges done with minimum movements by reading into the future due to his absolute talent, which he has shown me many times whenever we sparred last time.

“Damn it, damn it……..!!”

The difference of power was pounded into my mind.

Even after 2 years passed, was there no change in the difference of our power?

As if to prove the unburied difference between us, Sakaki has not taken his sword out from its sheath.

(No way……! I am an <<Exceed>>……..!! I have the <<Power>> that transcend humans…….!!)

Even though I shouted in my mind, I knew this already.

I knew at the moment Ouza-san called Sakaki a monster.

But, I had a feeling that I was different from 2 years ago.

I felt prideful after going through many death trails.

But, those feelings and pride were nothing less but conceit-------that's about it.

The fact that, forget punching Sakaki, I could not even touch him at all, says it all.

"Too bad. it's been 2 years yet you have no intentions in a conversation huh, Tooru"

"You know best that we aren't in a relationship where we can have a nice chat!!"

I poured more strength into my punches.

My fist filled with anger and hatred, had the power to destroy anything it touches.

But, it just won't connect.

Sakaki said sadly when he saw me like that.

"Is this the <<Power>> you gained in these 2 years, is this it?"

His words were just pouring fuel into the flames; my attacks turned more violent like the raging flames.

“I have no choice. I think it’s better if you cool down”

Sakaki mumbled and took action other than dodging.

The same time he dodged my fist, *Suu* he trust his palm forward----- and slightly touched my chest.

Zukkuuun!! The impact attacked me.

“Gah…….!!”

My body was blasted away and I slammed my back on the ground.

The momentum did not stop there; after a bounce, I tumbled over and fell to my knees before I fixed my posture.

“Damn!!”

I punched the ground from the anger fueled by how worthless I am, and was about to jump at Sakaki again-----

The silver girl stood in front of me as if to stop me.

“------!? Go away Julie! That person; Sakaki is my….!!”

“Ja--. I know, he’s the target for Otoha’s death”

“If you know then why-----“

“This is Tooru’s revenge…….i will not stop you nor do I have the rights to do anything about it but-----“

Those Ruby eyesred eyes were directed right at me.

“If I am going to see you fail your wish then I will at least say some things”

“…….What do you mean, Julie”

“I am saying forget getting revenge, you will not be able to touch that person if you keep this up”

Julie told me the words I did not want to hear the most.

The words my <<Duo>> who I together survived through many death battles were bitter and cruel-------

But, Julie’s talk did not end there.

“But-------“

Julie stopped her words and just when I thought she kneel down-----

She immediately hugged me.

“J-Julie…….?”

I was confused by the sudden action due to the situation we were at right now.

Julie continued talking while hugging me.

“The Tooru I know is a very strong person…….so please recall back. The Tooru that has been with me-----with everyone all this time, wasn’t someone that would swing his fist like a brute like what you are doing right now…….”

Her whispers sound somewhat lonely, and sad, making me relax my fist.

“I……with Julie…….with everyone……..”

While mumbling, memories of me studying diligently and overcoming many death trails with Julie and everyone else----Miyabi, Tachibana, Lilith, Tora and Tatsu in these few months, rotated around my mind.

(That’s right…..i…….i……!)

I poured strength and clenched my fist again.

My anger and hatred has not changed.

But, there was something different.

It's the conviction to swing my <<Power>> with my will and not getting swung around by my own <<Power>>.

"……..Thanks, Julie"

After telling it's okay, I lightly tapped Julie's back to make her let go.

I grabbed both her shoulders and nodded before I stood up.

"Take a good look of the <<Power>> I gained from everyone"

After looking back at Sakaki, just before I was going to walk forward-----

"Tooru…….!"

I stopped my legs when Julie called me"

After turning around, Julie looked at me with a really painful expression.

"I……"

After saying that much, the silver girl looked down.

After a slight pause, she looked back at me with her Ruby eyesred eyes.

"I will continue being with you from now on, Tooru"

It was Julie's way of sending a message-----I received it as "Please don't die".

Even if I am going to swing my <<Power>> with my will, it doesn't change the fact that this fight is hopeless; Julie knew this fact.

She already knows from that slight exchange.

She knows that there is still a heaven and earth difference between me and Sakaki.

Even after obtaining a <<Power>> which could not be even compared to when I was 2 years ago; a seed grown to a tree will still not reach the heavens.

But, I don't have the choice to leave.

Next------there's no thoughts to fight him after gaining a stronger <<Power>> than now at all.

The reason why I encountered Sakaki who did not show himself for these 2 years was probably because it's for only this moment.

That someday, was today.

But, whether or not there is a next time; only God knows that and not me.

That is why I will not leave no matter how hopeless it is.

At the same time, I strongly feel that I must not die here.

Just like what Julie said, I have the promise to protect everyone but, I have a stronger wish than that.

(Who will protect Julie's heart if I were to die here……..!!)

I don't want Julie to choose the road of the <<Avenger>>.

Because of that, I must not die here----I will not.

"Wait for me, Julie. I will come back"

"Ja----"

With Julie seeing me off with a silent and deep nod; I once again faced Sakaki.

"You regained your sanity huh, Tooru"

Sakaki said with a smile.

While his dark, quiet eyes were directed at me.

"……..who knows? My heart is so much in chaos that I can't wait to tear you apart"

"Sorry but, it's impossible for you"

"Say those words----after taking my life!!"

I kicked the ground the same time I shouted, and performed a kick------ but, there's no way such a high motion attack would land; and he dodged it again like the heat haze.

But I did not mind and the same time I landed on the ground, I continuously performed punches to not let him rest.

I put killing intents into the technique I accumulated in these 2 years.

"Un. This is a nice attack. It's a big difference from 2 years----no, compared to just now too, Tooru"

I felt anger when he praised me which I took as a taunt.

I then performed punches and kicks which were covered with my anger and hatred.

But, it's just like the exchange from the beginning; he continued dodging with minimum movements by predicting into the future.

The attacks won't connect------

After asking that much, it was still the same.

But, it's different now.

The only thing I am better than Sakaki was------attacks that focuses on endurance.

Of course with kicks, I avoided performing big swings and launched small yet sharp combo attacks.

It was not like the power attacks i used just now; it's now attacks which focus on continuity.

"You picked a method with quite a low possibility here, Tooru"

"Maybe. But no matter how amazing you are, it should be hard to continue this perfect dodge streak……..!!"

Even though my intentions were saw through; I couldn't care less and continued my combos.

No matter how monstrous Sakaki is, I should be higher in the physical stats area thanks to the <<Lucifer>> enhancement------that was what I believed.

Of course, even though it's small and focused, I was the one who had to continuously attack without resting but Sakaki's stamina depletion is harsher since he has to dodge with minimum movements.

The darkness in the evening sun was wobbling like the heat haze and was dodging my fist.

But, I stepped forward together with one hit and switched my pivot leg, resulting into a left stance switch.

Able to see through my attack was 1 reason, but the biggest reason is probably that my battle style is the Ittouryuu moves which Sakaki is very familiar with.

(Then-----)

"How about this!!"

<<Thunder speed roarHrungnir>>------my original move that does not exist in the Ittouryuu.

It was his first time seeing this countless air slicing punches and Sakaki-----

He saw through everything and dodged.

Even the defense specialist <<K>> had no choice but to guard when he first saw this.

“Un, this is an amazing move. But, it won’t work on me”

(Damn monster…….!!)

The genius which was called “Dragon God” before; has evolved into a bigger monster after 2 years of time passed.

In front of this hopeless difference in power that was enough to give me the shivers; I continued to swing my fist regardless.

It’s either I lose my stamina first or Sakaki failing to dodge first------

This reckless plan was just a stepping stone for my next step.

(Over here…….!!)

“------!!”

Sakaki’s expression slightly froze for an instant.

Because my fist suddenly stopped on it’s track.

After an instant, I changed to a grab instead of a punch-----and grabbed Sakaki’s wrist.

“It won’t matter how much you predict if I slam you down!!”

The moment I twisted his wrist and was about to throw him------*Spin* ***my world*** turned around.

“Wha…….!?”

The red sky colored by the evening sun and the ground filled with grown grass switched places, and I immediately received a strong impact on my back.

“------Gahaa!!”

Instead of throwing him, I was thrown away instead and slammed on the ground.

I immediately rolled around and took distance before kneeling down but, there was no attack coming.

“I think that was a good move. But thanks to that, I think this will tell you that no matter what plan you initiate, it will be useless”

“Guh……..*Cough*……A-aikido……..?”

A jujutsu skill that reverses the opponent by using the opponent’s strength with the user’s strength included---------the opponent then takes on a much stronger impact than the damage of the throw if it was successful.

Even though (Bare hand) weaponless skills exist in the Ittouryuu we learned, most the skills are compromised in hitting the vitals (Blows). Because of that, there are little throwing skills, let alone there being Aikido jujutsu skills.

“It’s nothing tough if you can see the flow”

Even though it sounds easy, there’s no way I could not understand how hard it is.

Especially, there’s a close combat jujutsu user-Tachibana around me in these few months.

At the same time, I understood something from that one match.

Sakaki clearly surpasses Tachibana skills.

“You’re really starting to become a real monster…….”

“Monster huh……that’s right, that is exactly right. That’s because-------“

Sakaki reacted to my mumble and talked about himself.

“I can kill the weak”

“-------!! Sakaki, you bastard!!”

After hearing the words Sakaki said, the flashback of Otoha dying in my arms, and the scene of my Dojo comrades slashed cruelly, came up-------causing the anger and hatred that I was barely holding back to flow back out to the front.

But-----

“Tooru!!”

Julie’s voice stopped me.

“----------!!”

Sakaki said to me this after seeing me endured with a trembling fist after failing to suppress my emotions.

“The reason why you stopped because of her words was because of the <<Power>> you gained in this 2……no, in this 4 months------love is it”

“……it’s true that the <<Power>> I gained in these 4 months stopped me. But, it’s not love. You had this too before. This is-----“

I pointed my fist at Sakaki, and told him about the <<Power>> that exist between us until that summer day.

“The <<Power>> called <<Bond>>!!”

Sakaki heard my words and made a quiet smile.

“I had that huh……”

It might be my imagination that he looked kind of lonely.

“If that day did not come, we would still be walking together on this bright road……but I threw everything of that away. In order to grant my wish----------“

“Wish…….?”

Sakaki silently nodded.

“Yes, the thing I wish for. It’s the true darkness-----the stage of the abyss”

“True darkness? Stage of the abyss? What the heck is that”

Sakaki looked down when I asked him and answered with a somewhat lonely tone.

“It’s something you won’t understand, Tooru”

“……..you have no intentions to tell huh. Well it’s not like I would understand anyway. How would I, if it’s a wish that involves taking everyone’s life!!”

We understood each other until that day came.

I thought we were friends walking side by side.

But------

Our paths differed.

“You threw away our <<Bond>>. You took away everything precious to me. I will not forgive you. That’s why-------“

I pulled back my fist like pulling a bow and shouted.

“Sakaki, I will kill you----absolutely!!”

“It’s impossible for you-----absolutely”

After Sakaki replied back quietly without bothering about my vigor, he took a stance with his sword still in its sheath.

It's something I have seen many times; it's the Ittouryou Iaijustu[4] with the upper left body brought forward, it's something that is mirrored to the one's publically known.

And---the presence he was releasing changed.

I felt a chill running up my spine when I felt the spirit Sakaki released.

It was cold like ice and it felt like endlessly clear water------

With those combined, it's a sword spirit that made me think of the bottomless abyss.

What waits now, is the hopeless exchange to determine the victor.

But-----

No matter how amazing Sakaki is, there's no way he can defend and attack at the same time.

That's why; there is a thread of hope there-------***As long as Sakaki follows the Ittouryuu***.

"There is one final question I want to ask, Tooru"

"……..what"

With those dark eyes, Sakaki asked me as if he was peeking into my mind.

"If you kill me-------are you going to protect new <<Bonds>> with those blood stained hands?"

"--------! I don't need to answer you"

There were no more words to exchange.

After a pause silence------

[4] Drawing sword technique

I was the first one to move.

I kicked the ground with all my might and jumped into his sword range in full speed.

Instantly-----

Sakaki pulled out his sword.

He was slicing up wards diagonally towards my heart-----from the left side.

But, this instant was the thread of hope that has a chance of victory------

Sakaki does not know.

I have a method to block his sword.

That <<Power>> will definitely block the approaching fang coming from the left side.

I shouted.

The <<Power>> of the <<Soul>> that I gained------

“<<Blaze>>!!”

The <<Shield>> manifested at my left arm, clashed with his Godspeed fang------

And, Sakaki's sword could not endure the impact and broke.

I then released my other <<Power>>------my own fangs.

“Destroy----<<MjolnirThunder god’s strike>>!!”

Epilogue

Part 1

“No way……”

My fang----Mjolnir definitely pierced Sakaki’s chest.

No, it should have.

But, I was wrong.

Sakaki stopped my fist with his palm.

Even though it doesn’t look like he was using much strength, Sakaki stopped my strongest <<Fang>> without breaking a sweat.

“That <<Shield>> and <<Fang>> is the <<power>> you gained huh, Tooru”

The darkness smiled.

It felt lonely.

It felt sad.

“Then, it’s my turn to show you my <<Power>>”

A light appeared.

That blinding light was emitted from Sakaki’s chest.

And-----

The darkness grabbed the light.

“Wha……..!? Tha-that’s, impossible……..!?”

The light changed shape.

It changed into a sword with a black edge and white body.

“<<Blaze>>!?”

“No it isn’t, Tooru. This is different to what you all have. This weapon created from light belongs only to me, it’s my <<Soul>>-----<<Ogre>>”

After saying that, Sakaki slowly pointed that sword to the sky like what he did 2 years ago.

I mumbled blank, with the shock and impact I felt when the Mjolnir was blocked easily.

“No way……Sakaki, what are……”

“Okay then, we will end this here for today. I will tell you one last thing, Tooru”

The dark quiet eyes which looked like the abyss slightly shook before Sakaki swung down the <<Ogre>>.

I prepared my <<Shield>> instinctively when the lightning flash struck down.

In the next moment------

My <<Shield>> was sliced apart-----and it fell to the ground together with my arm.

“Your <<Fang>> will never reach me-----yes, absolutely”